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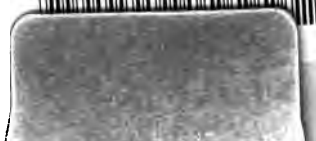
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RECORDS OF LATER LIFE.

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BY

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE,

AUTHOR OF "RECORD OF A GIRLHOOD."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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RECORDS OF LATER LIFE.

Upper Grosvenor Street, May, 1843.

DEAREST GRANNY,

I am of Lord Dacre's mind, and think it wisest and best to avoid the pain of a second parting with you. Light as *new* sorrows may appear to you, the heart—your heart—certainly will never want vitality enough to feel pain through your kindly affections. God bless you, therefore, my good friend, and farewell. For myself, I feel bruised all over, and numbed with pain ; so many sad partings have fallen, one after another, day after day, upon my heart, that acuteness of pain is lost in a mere sense of unspeakable, sore weariness ; and yet these bitter last days are to be prolonged. . . . God help us all ! But I am wrong to write thus sadly to you, my kind friend ; and indeed, though from this note you might not think my courage what it ought to be, I assure you it does not fail me, and, once through these cruel last days, I shall take up the burden of my life, I trust, with patience, cheerfulness, and firm faith in God, and that conviction which

is seldom absent from my mind, and which I find powerful to sustain me, that duty and not happiness is the purpose of life ; and that from the discharge of the one and the forgetfulness of the other, springs that peace which Christ told His friends He gave, and the world gives not, neither takes away. Let dear B— come and see me ; I shall like to look on her bright, courageous face again. Give my affectionate love to Lord Dacre, and believe me,

Ever gratefully and affectionately,
Your grandchild,
FANNY.

Upper Grosvenor Street, May 30th, 1843.

Thank you, dearest Hal, for Sydney Smith's letter about Francis Horner : it is bolder than anything I had a notion of, but very able and very amiable, and describes charmingly an admirable man. There is one expression he—Sydney Smith--applies to Horner that struck me as strange—he speaks of "important human beings" that he has known ; and, I cannot tell why, but with all my self-esteem and high opinion of human nature and its capabilities in general, the epithet "important" applied to human beings, made me smile, and keeps recurring to me as comical. It must have appeared much more so to you, I should think, with your degraded opinion of humanity.

You ask how our second party went off. Why, very well. It was much fuller than the other, and in hopes of inducing people to "spread themselves" a little, we had the refreshments put into my drawing-room ; but they still persisting in sticking (sticking literally)

all in the room with the piano, which rather annoyed me, because I hate the proximity of "important human beings," I came away from them, and had a charming quiet chat in the little boudoir with Lord Ashburton and Lord Dacre, during which they discussed the merits of Channing, and awarded him the most *unmitigated* praise, as a good and great man. It is curious enough that, in America, the opponents of Dr. Channing's views perpetually retorted upon him that he was a clergyman, a mere man of letters, whose peculiar mode of life could not possibly admit of his having large or just, or, above all, practical political knowledge and ideas, or any opinions about questions of government that could be worth listening to; whereas these two very distinguished Englishmen spoke with unqualified admiration of his sound and luminous treatment of such subjects, and, instancing what they considered his best productions, mentioned his letter to Clay upon the annexation of Texas, even before his moral and theological essays.

Our company stayed very late with us, till near two o'clock; and upon a remark being made about the much smaller consumption of refreshments than on the occasion of our first party, D——, our butler, very oracularly responded, "Quite a different class of people, sir;" which mode of accounting for the more delicate appetite of our more aristocratic guests, made with an ineffable air of cousinship to them all, sent me into fits of laughing.

You ask me what I shall have to do from Monday till Wednesday, to fill up my time and keep my thoughts from drowning themselves in crying. I

shall leave this house after breakfast for the *Clarendon*. I have a great many small last articles to purchase, and shall visit all my kindred once more. Then, too, the final packing for "board ship" will take me some time, and I have some letters to write too. I dine with Lady Dacre on Monday; they are to be alone except us and E—— and my sister. I shall leave them at eight o'clock to go and sit with my father till ten, his bed-time; and then return to Chesterfield Street [Lord Dacre's]. As for Tuesday—Heaven alone knows how I shall get through it.

On Thursday last we dined with Sydney Smith, where we met Lord and Lady Charlemont, Jeffrey Frederick Byng, Dickens, Lady Stepney, and two men whom I did not know,—a pleasant dinner; and afterwards we went to Mrs. Dawson Damer's,—a large assembly, more than half of them strangers to us. . . .

On Friday morning, Adelaide and E—— and we breakfasted with Rogers, to meet Sydney Smith, Hallam, and his daughter and niece, the United States Minister, Edward Everett, Empson, and Sir Robert Inglis. After breakfast I went to see Charles Greville, who is again laid up with the gout, and unable to move from his sofa. We dined with my sister, who had a large party in the evening; and as the hour for breaking up arrived, and I saw those pleasant kindly acquaintances pass one after another through the door, I felt as if I was watching the vanishing of some pleasant vision. The nearest and dearest of these phantasmagoria are yet round me; but in three days the last will have disappeared from my eyes, for who can tell how long? if not for ever!

All day yesterday I was extremely unwell, but packed vehemently. . . .

Charles Young, who is a most dear old friend of mine, and dotes upon my children, came to see them off, and went with them to the railroad. S—— begged for some of her grandfather's hair, but that he might not be told it was for her, for fear of grieving him!

This is the last letter you will get from me, written in this house. Victoire, quite tired out with packing, is lying asleep on the sofa, and poor dear Emily sits crying beside me.

Ever yours,
F. A. B.

Liverpool, Thursday, May 4th, 1843.

I wrote to you last thing last night, dearest Hal; and now farewell! I have received a better account of my father. . . . Dear love to Dorothy, and my last dear love to you. I shall write and send no more loves to any one. Lord Titchfield—blessings on him!—has sent me a miniature of my father, and four different ones of Adelaide.

God bless you, dear. Good-bye.

Yours,
FANNY.

Halifax Wharf, Wednesday, May 17th, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When I tell you that yesterday, for the first time, I was able to put pen to paper, or even to hold up my head, and that even after the small exertion of writing a few lines to my father I was so exhausted as to faint away, you will judge of the state of weak-

ness to which this dreadful process of crossing the Atlantic reduces your very *robustious* grandchild.

It is now the 17th of May, and we have been at sea thirteen days, and we are making rapid way along the coast of Nova Scotia, and shall touch at Halifax in less than an hour. There we remain, to land mails and passengers, about six hours; and in thirty-six more, wind and weather favouring us across the Bay of Fundy, we shall be in Boston. In fifteen days! Think of it, my dearest Granny! when thirty used to be considered a rapid and prosperous voyage.

My dear friend, how shall I thank you for those warm words of cheering and affectionate encouragement which I received when I was lying worn out for want of sleep and food, after we had been eight days on this dreadful deep? My kind friend, I do not want courage, I assure you; and God will doubtless give me sufficient strength for my need: but you can hardly imagine how deplorably sad I feel; how poor, who lately was so rich; how lonely, who lately was surrounded by so many friends. I know all that remains to me, and how the treasure of love I have left behind will be kept, I believe, in many kind hearts for me till I return to claim it. But the fact is, I am quite exhausted, body and mind, and incapable of writing, or even thinking with half the energy I hope to gather from the first inch of dry land I step upon. Like Antæus, I look for strength from my mother, the Earth, and doubt not to be brave again when once I am on shore.

The moment I saw the dear little blue enamel heart I exclaimed, "Oh, it is Lady Dacre's hair in

it!" But tears, and tears, and nothing but tears, were the only greeting I could give the pretty locket, and your and dear B——'s letters.

My poor chicks have borne the passage well, upon the whole—sick and sorry one hour, and flying about the deck like birds the next. . . .

Our passage has been made in the teeth of the wind, and against a heavy sea the whole way. We have had no absolute storm; but the tender mercies of the Atlantic, at best, are terrible. Of our company I can tell nothing, having never left my bed till within the last three days. They seem to be chiefly English officers and their families, bound for New Brunswick and the Canadas. The ship stops, and to the perpetual flailing of the paddles succeeds the hissing sound of the escaping steam. We are at Halifax. I send you this earliest news of us because you will be glad, I am sure, to get it.

Give my love to my dear lord; my blessing and a kiss to dear B——. I will write to her from New York, if possible. God bless you, my dear friend, and reward you for all your kindness to me, and comfort and make peaceful the remainder of your earthly pilgrimage. I can hardly hold my pen in my hand, or my head up; but am ever your grateful and affectionate

FANNY.

Philadelphia, Tuesday, May 23rd, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

We landed in Boston on Friday morning at six o'clock, and almost before I had drawn my first

breath of Yankee air, Elizabeth Sedgwick and Kate had thrown their arms round me.

You will want to know of our seafaring ; and mine truly was miserable, as it always is, and perhaps even more wretched than ever before. I lay in a fever for ten days, without being able to swallow anything but two glasses of calves'-foot jelly, and oceans of iced water. At the end of this time, I began to get a little better ; though, as I had neither food, nor sleep, nor any relief from positive sea-sickness, I was in a deplorable state of weakness. I just contrived to crawl out of my berth two days before we reached Halifax, where I was cheered, and saddened too, by the sight of well-known English faces. I had just finished letters to my father, E——, and Lady Dacre, for the *Hibernia*, which was to touch there the next morning on her way *home*, and was sitting disconsolate with my head in my hands, in a small cabin on deck, to which I had been carried up from below as soon as I was well enough to bear being removed from my own, when Mr. Cunard, the originator of this Atlantic Steam Mail-packet enterprise, whom I had met in London, came in, and with many words of kindness and good cheer, carried me up to his house in Halifax, where I rested for an hour, and where I saw Major S——, an uncle of my dear B——, and where we talked over English friends and acquaintances and places, and whence I returned to the ship for our two days' more misery, with a bunch of exquisite flowers, born English subjects, which are now withering in my letter-box among my most precious farewell words of friends.

The children bore the voyage as well as could be

expected; sick one half hour, and stuffing the next; little F—— *pervading* the ship from stern to stern, like Ariel, and generally presiding at the officers' mess in undismayed she-loneliness.

Your friend, Captain G——, was her devoted slave and admirer. . . . I saw but little of the worthy captain, being only able to come on deck the last four days of our passage; but he was most kind to us all, and after romping with the children and walking Miss Hall off her legs, he used to come and sit down by me, and sing, and hum, and whistle every imaginable tune that ever lodged between lines and spaces, and some so original that I think they never were imprisoned within any musical bars whatever. I gave him at parting the fellow of your squeeze of the hand, and told him that as yours was on my account, mine was on yours. He left us at Boston to go on to Niagara.

Our ship was extremely full, and there being only one stewardess on board, the help she could afford any of us was very little. . . . While in Boston, I made a pilgrimage to dear Dall's grave: a bitter and a sad few minutes I spent, lying upon that ground beneath which she lay, and from which her example seemed to me to rise in all the brightness of its perfect lovingness and self-denial. The oftener I think of her, the more admirable her life appears to me. She was undoubtedly gifted by nature with a temperament of rare healthfulness and vigour, which, combined with the absence of imagination and nervous excitability, contributed much to her uniform cheerfulness, courage, and placidity of temper; but her self-forgetfulness was most uncommon, her inexhaustible kindness and

devotedness to every creature that came within her comfortable and consolatory influence was "twice-blessed," and from her grave her lovely virtues seemed to call to me to get up and be of good cheer, and strive to forget myself, even as perfectly as she had done. . . . How bitter and dark a thing life is to some of God's poor creatures !

I have told you now all I have to tell of myself, and being weary in spirit and in body, will bid you farewell, and go and try to get some sleep. God bless you, my beloved friend; I am very sad, but far from out of courage. Give dear Dorothy my affectionate love.

I am, ever yours,

FANNY.

Philadelphia, Tuesday, 30th, 1843.

MY DEAR F——,

We are all established in a boarding-house here, where my acquaintances assure me that I am very comfortable; and so I endeavour to persuade myself that my acquaintances are better judges of that than I am myself. It is the first time in my life that I have ever lived in any such manner or establishment; so I have no means of trying it by comparison; it is simply detestable to me, but compared with *more* detestable places of the same sort, it is probably *less* so. "There are differences, look you!" . . .

I am sure your family deserve to have a temple erected to them by all foreigners in America; for it seems to me that you and your people are home, country, and friends, to all such unfortunates as happen

to have left those small items of satisfaction behind them. The stranger's blessing should rest on your dwellings, and one stranger's grateful blessing does rest there. . . .

Believe me, yours most truly,

F. A. B.

Please to observe that the charge of 13s. 8d. is for personal advice, conferences, and tiresome morning visits; and if you make any such charge, I shall expect you to earn it. 6s. 4d. is all you are entitled to for anything but personal communication.

[This postscript, and the beginning of the letter, were jesting references to a lawyer's bill, amounting to nearly £50, presented to me by a young legal gentleman with whom we had been upon terms of friendly acquaintance, and whom we had employed, as he was just beginning business, to execute the papers for the deed of gift I have mentioned, by which my father left me at his death my earnings, the use of which I had given up to him on my marriage for his lifetime.

Our young legal gentleman used to pay us the most inconceivably tedious visits, during which his principal object appeared to be to obtain from us every sort of information upon the subject of all and sundry American investments and securities. Over and over again I was on the point of saying "Not at home" to these interminably wearisome visitations, but refrained, out of sheer good nature and unwillingness to mortify my *visitant*. Great, therefore,

was our surprise, on receiving a *bill of costs*, to find every one of these intolerable intrusions upon our time and patience charged, as personal business consultations, at 13s. 8d. The thing was so ludicrous, that I laughed till I cried, over the price of our friend's civilities. On paying the amount, though of course I made no comment upon the price of my social and legal privileges, I suppose the young gentleman's own conscience (he was only just starting in his profession, and may have had one) pricked him slightly, for with a faint hysterical giggle, he said, "I dare say you think it rather sharp practice, but, you see, getting married and furnishing the house is rather expensive,"—an explanation of the reiterated thirteens and sixpences of the bill, which was candid, at any rate, and put them in the more affable light of an extorted wedding present, which was rather pleasant.]

Philadelphia, June 4th, 1843.

DEAREST GRANNY,

You will long ere this have received my grateful acknowledgments of your pretty present and most kind letter, received, with many tears and heart-yearnings, in the middle of that horrible ocean. I will not renew my thanks, though I never can thank you enough for that affectionate inspiration of following me on that watery waste, with tokens of your remembrance, and cheering that most dismal of all conditions with such an unlooked-for visitation of love.

I wrote to you from Halifax, where, on the deck of our steamer, your name was invoked with heartfelt commendations by myself and Major S——. That was

a curious conversation of his and mine, if such it could be called ; scarcely more than a breathless enumeration of the names of all of you, coupled indeed with loving and admiring additions, and ejaculations full of regret and affection. Poor man, how I did pity him ! and how I did pity myself !

I have just written to our B——, and feel sad at the meagre and unsatisfactory account which my letter contains of me and mine ; to you, my excellent friend, I will add this much more. . . . But I shall forbear saying anything about my conditions until they become better in themselves, or I become better able to bear them. God bless you, and those you love, my dear Lady Dacre. Give my affectionate “duty” to my lord, and believe me ever your gratefully attached

F. A. B.

Philadelphia, June 26th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Your sad account of Ireland is only more shocking than that of the newspapers, because it is yours, and because you are in the midst of all this wild confusion and dismay. How much you must feel for your people ! However much one’s sympathy may be enlisted in any public cause, the private instances of suffering and injustice, which inevitably attend all political changes wrought by popular commotion, are most afflicting.

I hardly know what it is reasonable to expect from, or hope for, Ireland. A separation from England seems the wildest project conceivable ; and yet, Heaven knows, no great benefit appears hitherto to have ac-

crued to the poor "earthen pot" from its fellowship with the "iron" one. As for hoping that quiet may be restored through the intervention of military force, at the bayonet's point,—I cannot hope any such thing. Peace so procured is but an earnest of future war, and the victims of such enforced tranquillity bequeath to those who are only temporarily *quelled*, not permanently *quieted*, a legacy of revenge, which only accumulates, and never goes long unclaimed and unpaid. England seems to me invariably to deal unwisely with her dependencies; she performs in the Christian world very much the office that Rome did in the days of her great heathen supremacy—carry to the ends of the earth by process of conquest the seeds of civilization, of legislation, and progress; and then, as though her mission was fulfilled, by gradual mismanagement, abuse of power, and insolent contempt of those she has subjugated, is ejected by the very people to whom she had brought, at the sword's point, the knowledge of freedom and of law. It is a singular office for a great nation, but I am not sure that it is not our Heaven-appointed one, to conquer, to improve, to oppress, to be rebelled against, to coerce, and finally to be kicked out, *videlicet*, these United States.

But now to matters personal. . . . The intense heat affects me extremely; and not having a horse, or any riding exercise, the long walks which I compel myself to take over these burning brick pavements, and under this broiling sun, are not, I suppose, altogether beneficial to me. . . .

I went to church yesterday, and Mr. F—— preached an Abolition sermon. This subject seems to press more

and more upon his mind, and he speaks more and more boldly upon it, in spite of having seen various members of his congregation get up and leave the church in the middle of one of his sermons, in which he adverted to the forbidden theme of slavery. Some of these, who had been members of the church from its earliest establishment, and were very much attached to him, expressed their regret at the course they felt compelled to adopt, and said if he would only *give them notice* when he intended to preach upon that subject, they would content themselves with absenting themselves on those occasions only, to which his reply not unnaturally was, "Why, those who would leave the church on those occasions, are precisely the persons who are in need of such exhortations!"—and of course he persevered.

I think it will end by his being expelled by his congregation. It will be well with him wherever he goes; but, alas, for those he leaves! I expect to be forbidden to take S—— to church, as soon as the report of yesterday's sermon gets noised abroad. . . .

God bless you, dear. Good-bye. I am heavy-hearted, and it is a great effort to me to write. What would I not give to see you! Love to dear Dorothy, when you see or write to her.

I am, ever yours,

FANNY.

Yellow Springs, Pennsylvania, July 6th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Here I am sitting (not indeed "on a rail"), but next thing to it, on the very hardest of wooden benches; my feet on the very hardest bar of the very

hardest wooden chair; and my *cork* inkstand, of the most primitive formation, placed on a rough wooden table about a foot square, which is not large enough to hold my paper (so my knees are my desk), and is covered with a coarse piece of rag carpeting;—the whole, a sort of prison-cell furnishing. Before me stretches as far as it can about a quarter of an acre of degraded uneven ground, enclosed in a dilapidated whitewashed wooden paling, and clothed, except in several mangy bare patches, with rank weedy grass, untended unwholesome shrubs, and untidy neglected trees. . . . Behind me is a whitewashed room about fifteen feet by twelve, containing a rickety, black horse-hair sofa, all worn and torn into prickly ridges; six rheumatic wooden chairs; a lame table covered with a plaid shawl of my own, being otherwise without cloth to hide its nakedness, or the indefinite variety of dirt spots and stains which defile its dirty skin. In this room Miss Hall and S—— are busily engaged at “lessons.” Briefly, I am sitting on the piazza (so-called) of one of a group of tumble-down lodging-houses and hotels, which, embosomed in a beautiful valley in Pennsylvania, and having in the midst of them an exquisite spring of mineral water, rejoice in the title of the “Yellow Springs.”

Some years ago this place was a fashionable resort for the Philadelphians, but other watering-places have carried off its fashion, and it has been almost deserted for some time past; and except invalids unable to go far from the city (which is within a three hours’ drive from here), and people who wish to get fresh air for their children without being at a distance from their

business, very few visitors come here, and those of an entirely different sort from the usual summer haunters of watering-places in the country.

The heat in the city has been perfectly frightful. . . . On Sunday last a thermometer, rested on the ground, rose to 130° , that being the heat of the earth; and when it was hung up in the shade, the mercury fell, but remained at 119° . Imagine what an air to breathe! . . . Late in the afternoon last Sunday, a storm came on like a West Indian tornado; the sky came down almost to the earth, the dust was suddenly blown up into the air in red-hot clouds that rushed in at the open windows like thick volumes of smoke, and then the rain poured from the clouds, steadily, heavily, and continuously, for several hours.

In the night the whole atmosphere changed, and as I sat in my children's nursery after putting them to bed in the dark, that they might sleep, I felt gradually the spirit of life come over the earth, in cool breezes between the heavy showers of rain. The next morning the thermometer was below 70° , 30° lower than the day before. . . . This morning the children took me up a hill which rises immediately at the back of the house, on the summit of which is a fine crest of beautiful forest trees, from which place there is a charming prospect of hill and dale, a rich rolling country in fine cultivation—the yellow crops of grain, running like golden bays into the green woodland that clothes the sides and tops of all the hills, the wheat, the grass, the oats, and the maize, all making different checkers in the pretty variegated patchwork covering of the prosperous summer earth.

The scattered farmhouses glimmered white from among the round-headed verdure of their neighbouring orchards. Nowhere in the bright panorama did the eye encounter the village, the manor-house, and the church spire,—that picturesque poetical group of feudal significance; but everywhere, the small lonely farmhouse, with its accompaniments of huge barns and out-houses, ugly the one and ungainly the others, but standing in the midst of their own smiling well-cultivated territory, a type of independent republicanism, perhaps the pleasantest type of its pleasantest features.

In the whole scene there was nothing picturesque or poetical (except, indeed, the blue glorious expanse of the unclouded sky, and the noble trees, from the protection of whose broad shade we looked forth upon the sunny world). But the wide landscape had a peaceful, plenteous, prosperous aspect, that was comfortable to one's spirit, and exceedingly pleasant to the eye.

After our walk we came down into the valley, and I went with the children to the cold bath—a beautiful deep spring of water, as clear as crystal and almost as cold as ice, surrounded by whitewashed walls, which rising above it to a discreet height, screen it only from earthly observers. No roof covers the watery chamber but the green spreading branches of tall trees, and the blue summer sky, into which you seem to be stepping as you disturb the surface of the water. Into this lucid liquid gem I gave my chickens and myself, overhead, three breathless dips—it is too cold to do more,—and since that, I have done nothing but write to you.

You ask what is said to Sydney Smith's "petition." Why, the honest men of the country say, "'Tis true, 'tis pity; pity 'tis, 'tis true." It is thought that Pennsylvania will *ultimately* pay, and not repudiate, but it will be *some time* first. God bless you, my dear Hal. I have not been well and am miserably depressed, but the country always agrees excellently with me.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Philadelphia, Sunday, 9th, 1843.

MY DEAR T——,

After last Sunday's awful heat, it became positively impossible to keep the children any longer in Philadelphia; and they were accordingly removed to the Yellow Springs, a healthy and pleasant bathing-place at three hours' distance from the city. On Saturday morning their nurse, the only servant we have, thought proper to disapprove of my deportment towards her, and left me to the maternal delights of dressing, washing, and looking after my children during that insufferable heat. Miss H—— was entirely incapacitated, and I feared was going to be ill, and I have reason to thank Heaven that I am provided with the constitution that I have, for it is certain that I need it. On Sunday night a violent storm cooled the atmosphere, and on Monday morning the nurse was good enough to forgive me, and came back: so that the acme of my trial did not last too long. On Tuesday the children were removed to the country, and though the physician and my own observation assured me that F—— required sea-bathing, it is an

unspeakable relief to me to see her out of the city, and to find this place healthy and pleasant for them. The country is pretty, the air pure, the baths delightful; and my chicks, thank God, already beginning to improve in health and spirits.

As for the accommodations, the less said about them the better. We inhabit a sort of very large barn, or barrack, divided into sundry apartments, large and small; and having gleaned the whole house to furnish our *drawing-room*, that chamber now contains one rickety table, one horse-hair sofa that has three feet, and six wooden chairs, of which it may be said that they have several legs among them; but I must add that we have the whole house to ourselves, and our meals are brought to us from the "Great Hotel" across the street,—privileges for which it behoves me to be humbly thankful, and so I am. If the children thrive I shall be satisfied; and as for accommodation, or even common comfort, my habitation and mode of life in our Philadelphia boarding-house have been so far removed from any ideas of comfort or even decency that I ever entertained, that the whitewashed walls, bare rooms, and tumble-down verandahs of my present residence are but little more so. . . . I suppose there was something to like in Mr. Webster's speech, since you are surprised at my not liking it; but what was there to like? The one he delivered on the laying of the foundation-stone of the monument (on Bunker's Hill, near Boston) pleased me very much indeed; I thought some parts of it very fine. But the last one displeased me utterly. . . . Pray send me word all about that place by the sea-side, with the wonderful

name of "Quoge." My own belief is, that the final "e" you tack on to it is an affected abbreviation for the sake of refinement, and that it is, by name and nature, really "Quagmire."

Believe me always,

Yours truly,

F. A. B.

Yellow Springs, July 12th, 1843.

DEAR GRANNY,

The intelligence contained in your letter [of the second marriage of the Rev. Frederick Sullivan, whose first wife was Lady Dacre's only child], gave me for an instant a painful shock, but before I had ended it that feeling had given place to the conviction that the contemplated change at the vicarage was probably for the happiness and advantage of all concerned. The tone of B——'s letter satisfied me, and for her and her sister's feeling upon the subject I was chiefly anxious. About you, my dearest Granny, I was not so solicitous; however deep your sentiment about the circumstance may be, you have lived long and suffered much, and have learned to accept sorrow wisely, let it come in what shape it will. The impatience of youth renders suffering very terrible to it; and the eager desire for happiness which belongs to the beginning of life makes sorrow appear like some unnatural accident (almost a personal injury), a sort of horrid surprise, instead of the all but daily business, and part of the daily bread of existence, as one grows by degrees to find that it is.

His daughter's feeling about Mr. Sullivan's mar-

riage being what it is, the marriage itself appears to me wise and well; and I have no doubt that it will bring a blessing to the home at the vicarage, and its dear inmates. Pray remember me most kindly to Mr. Sullivan, and beg him to accept my best wishes for his happiness, and that of all who belong to him; the latter part of my wish I know he is mainly instrumental in fulfilling himself. May he find his reward accordingly!

Of myself, my dear friend, what shall I tell you? I am in good health, thank God! and as much good spirits as inevitably belong to good health, and a sound constitution in middle life. . . .

The intense heat of the last month had made both my children ill, and a week ago they were removed to this place, called the Yellow Springs, from a fine mineral source, the waters of which people both bathe in and drink. Round it is gathered a small congregation of rambling farmhouses, built for the accommodation of visitors. The country is pretty and well cultivated, and the air remarkable for its purity and healthiness; and here we have taken lodgings, and shall probably remain during all the heat of the next six weeks, after which I suppose we shall return to town.

I wish you could see my present *locale*. The house we are in is the furthest from the "Hotel" (as it is magnificently called), and is a large, rambling, white-washed edifice, with tumble-down wooden piazzas (verandahs, as we should call them) surrounding its ground floor. This consists of one very large room, intended for a public dining-room, with innumerable

little cells round it, all about twelve feet by thirteen, which are the bedrooms. One of these spacious sleeping-apartments, opening on one side to the common piazza and on the other to the common eating-room, is appropriated to me as a "private parlour," as it is called; and being at present, most fortunately, the only inmates of this huge barrack, we have collected into this "extra exclusive" saloon all the furniture that we could glean out of all the other rooms in the house; and what do you think we have got? Two tiny wooden tables, neither of them large enough to write upon; a lame horse-hair sofa, and six lame wooden chairs. As the latter, however, are not all lame of the same leg, it is quite a pretty gymnastic exercise to balance one's self as one sits by turns upon each of them, bringing dexterously into play all the different muscles necessary to maintain one's seat on any of them. It makes sitting quite a different process from what I have ever known it to be, and separates it entirely from the idea usually connected with it, of rest. But this we call luxury, and, compared with the condition of the other rooms (before we had stripped them of their contents), so it undoubtedly is. The walls of this boudoir of mine are roughly whitewashed, the floor roughly boarded, and here I abide with my chicks. The decided improvement in their health and looks and spirits, since we left that horrible city, is a great deal better than sofas and armchairs to me, or anything that would be considered elsewhere the mere decencies of life; and having the means of privacy and cleanliness, my only two absolute indispensables. I take this rather primitive existence pleasantly

enough. This house is built at the foot of a low hill the sides of which are cultivated; while the immediate summit retains its beautiful crest of noble trees, from beneath which to look out over the wide landscape is a very agreeable occupation towards sunset.

Chester County, as this is called, is the richest, agriculturally speaking, in Pennsylvania; and the face of the country is certainly one of the comeliest, well-to-do, smiling, pleasant earth's faces that can be seen on a summer's day; the variety of the different tinted crops (among them the rich green of the maize, or Indian corn, which we have not in England), clothing the hill-sides and running like golden bays into the green forest that once covered them from base to summit, and still crowns every highest point, forms the gayest coat of many colours for the whole rural region.

The human interest in the landscape is supplied, not by village, mansion, parsonage, or church, but by numerous small isolated farmhouses, their white walls gleaming in the intense sunlight from amidst the trim verdure of their orchards, and their large barns and granaries surveying complacently far and wide the abundant harvests that are to be gathered into their capacious walls. The comfort, solidity, loneliness, and inelegance, not to say, ugliness, of these rural dwellings is highly characteristic, the latter quality being to a certain degree modified by distance; the others represent very pleasingly, in the midst of the prosperous prospect, the best features of the institutions which govern the land—security, freedom, independence.

There is nothing visibly picturesque or poetical in

the whole scene, nothing has a hallowed association for memory, or an exciting historical interest, or a charm for the imagination. But under this bright and ever-shining sky, the objects and images that the eye encounters are all cheerful, pleasing, peaceful, and satisfactorily suggestive of the blessings of industry, and the secure repose of modest, moderate prosperity.

Dearest Granny, I had not intended to cross my letter to you ; but the young ones will decipher the scrawl for you, and I flatter myself that you will not object to my filling my paper as full as it will hold. These four small pages, even when they are crossed, make but a poor amount of communication compared with the full and frequent personal intercourse I have enjoyed with you.

What a shocking mess you are all making of it in Ireland just now ! I hear too that you are threatened with bad crops. Should this be true, I do not wonder at my lord's croaking, for what will the people do ?

The water we bathe in here is strongly impregnated with iron, and so cold that very few people go into the spring itself. I do : and when the thermometer is at 98° in the shade, a plunge into water below 50° is something of a shock. B—— would like it, and so do I. Will you give my affectionate remembrance to my lord, and

Believe me always, dear Granny,
Your attached

F. A. B.

Yellow Springs, 19th July, 1843.

And so, my dear T——, you are a "tied-by-the-leg" (as we used, in our laughing days, to call the penniless young Attachés to Legations)? I am heartily sorry, as yours is not diplomatic, but physical infirmity; and would very readily, had I been anywhere within possible reach, have occupied the empty armchair in your library, and "charmed your annoys" to the best of my ability. . . . Dear me! through how long a lapse of years your desire that I would undertake a translation of Schiller's "Fiesco" leads me! When I was between sixteen and seventeen years old, I actually began an adaptation of it to the English stage; but partly from thinking the catastrophe unmanageable, and from various other motives, I never finished it: but it was an early literary dream of mine, and you have recalled to me a very happy period of my life in reminding me of that labour of love. You perhaps imagine from this that I understood German, which I then did not; my acquaintance with the German drama existing only through very admirably executed literal French translations, which formed part of an immense collection of plays, the dramatic literature of Europe in innumerable volumes, which was one of my favourite studies in my father's library.

I am not, however, at all of your opinion, that "Fiesco" is the best of Schiller's plays. I think "Don Carlos," and "William Tell," and especially "Wallenstein," finer; the last, indeed, finest of them all. My own especial favourite, however, for many years (though I do not at all think it his best play) was "Joan of Arc." As for his violation of history in

“Wallenstein” and “Mary Stuart,” I think little of that compared with the singular insensibility he has shown to the glory of the French heroine’s death, which is the more remarkable because he generally, above most poets, especially recognizes the sublimity of moral greatness; and how far does the red pile of the religious and patriotic martyr, surrounded by her terrified and cowardly English enemies, and her more basely cowardly and ungrateful French friends, transcend in glory the rose-coloured battle-field apotheosis Schiller has awarded her! Joan of Arc seems to me never yet to have been done justice to by either poet or historian, and yet what a subject for both! The treatment of the character of Joan of Arc in “Henry VI.” is one reason why I do not believe it to be wholly Shakespeare’s. He never, it is true, writes out of the spirit of his time, neither was he ever absolutely and servilely subject to it—for example, giving in Shylock the delineation of the typical Jew as conceived in his day, think of that fine fierce vindication of their common humanity with which he challenges the Christian Venetians, Solanio and Solarino—“Hath not a Jew eyes?” etc.

By-the-by, did you ever hear a whisper of a suggestion that Joan of Arc was *not* burned? There is such a tradition, that she was rescued, reprieved, and lived to a fine old age, though rather scorched.

And now, at the fag end of my paper, to answer your question about Leonora Lavagna. I think, beyond all doubt, the sentiment Schiller makes her express as occurring to her at the altar, perfectly natural. When the character and position of Leonora

are considered, her love for Fiesco—however, chiefly composed of admiration for his person, and more amiable and brilliant personal qualities—must inevitably have derived some of its strength from her generous patriotism and insulted family pride; and nothing, in my opinion, can be more probable than that she should have seen in him the deliverer of Genoa, at the moment when every faculty of her heart and mind was absorbed in the contemplation of all the noble qualities with which she believed him endowed.

The love of different women is, of course, made up of various elements, according to their natural temperament, mental endowments, and educated habits of thought; and it seems to me, the sort of sentiment Leonora describes herself as feeling towards Fiesco at the moment of their marriage, is eminently characteristic of such a woman. So much for the Countess Lavagna.

I think you are quite mistaken in calling Thekla a “merely ideal” woman; she is a very *real* German woman—rarely perhaps, but to be found in all the branches of the Anglo-Saxon tree, in England certainly, and even in America.

To these subjects of very pleasing interest to me, succeeds in your letter the exclamation elicited by poor Mrs. D——’s misfortune, “Blessed are they who die in the Lord!” to which let me answer, “Yea, rather, blessed are they who live in the Lord!” Our impatience of suffering may make death sometimes appear the most desirable thing in all God’s universe; yet who can tell what trials or probations may be ordained for us hereafter? The idea that there “may

be yet more work to do," probably *must* be (for how few finish their task here before the night cometh when "no man can work," as far as this world is concerned, at any rate!), is a frequent speculation with me; so that whenever, in sheer weariness of spirit, I have been tempted to wish for death, or in moments of desperation felt almost ready to seize upon it, the thought, not of what I may have to suffer, but what I must have to do, *i.e.* the work left undone here, checks the rash wish and rasher imagination, and I feel as if I must sit down again to try and work. But weariness of life makes the idea of existence prolonged beyond death sometimes almost oppressive, and it seems to me that there are times when one would be ready to consent to lie down in one's grave, and become altogether as the clods of the valley, relinquishing one's immortal birthright simply for rest. To be sure you will answer that, for rest to be pleasurable, consciousness must accompany it; but oh, how I should like to be *consciously unconscious* for a little while!—which possibly may strike you as nonsense.

I dare say women are, as you say, like cats in a great many respects. I acknowledge myself like one, only in the degree of electricity in my hair and skin; I never knew anybody but a cat who had so much.

Thank you for the paper about Theodore Hook. I knew him and disliked him. He was very witty and humorous, certainly; but excessively coarse in his talk, and gross in his manners, and was hardly ever strictly sober after dinner. . . .

Philadelphia, August 4th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Indeed I am not spending my summer with my friends at Lenox, . . . but boarding at a third-rate watering-place about thirty miles from Philadelphia, where there is a fine mineral spring and baths, remarkably pure and bracing air, and a pretty, pleasant country, under which combination of favourable influences we have all improved very much, and dear little F— looks once more as if she would live through the summer, which she did not when we left Philadelphia. As for our accommodations at this place, they are as comfortless as it is possible to imagine, but that really signifies comparatively little. . . . I ride, and walk, and fish, and look abroad on the sweet kindly face of Nature, and commune gratefully with my Father in heaven whenever I do so; and the hours pass swiftly by, and life is going on, and the rapid flight of time is a source of rejoicing to me. . . . I laughed a very sad laugh at your asking me if my watch and chain had been recovered or replaced. How? By whom? With what? No, indeed, nor are they likely to be either recovered or replaced. I offered, as a sort of inducement to semi-honesty on the part of the thief or thieves, to give up the watch and pencil-case to whoever would bring back my dear chain, but in vain. Had I possessed any money, I should have offered the largest possible reward to recover it; but, as it is, I was forced to let it go, without being able to take even the usual methods resorted to for the recovery of lost valuables. I will now bid you good-bye, dearest Hal. I have no

more to tell you; and whenever I mention or think of that chain, I feel so sad that I hate to speak or move. I flatter myself that, were you to see me now, you would approve highly of my appearance. I am about half the size I was when last you saw me.

God bless you, dear. I am, therefore, only half yours,

FANNY.

Philadelphia, August 15th, 1843.

MY DEAR T——,

Yesterday, at three o'clock, I was told that we must all return to town by five, which accordingly was accomplished, not without strenuous exertion and considerable inconvenience in making our preparations in so short a time. I do not know in the least whether we are to remain here now, or go elsewhere, or what is to become of us. . . .

I do not know the lines you allude to as mine, called "The Memory of the Past," and think you must have written them yourself in your sleep, and then accused me of them, which is not genteel. I have no recollection of any lines of my own so called. Depend upon it, you dreamt them. I hope you had the conscience to make good verses, since you did it in my name. I have not supposed you either "neglectful or dead." I knew you were at Quoge, which Mr. G—— reported to be a very nice place. . . .

You have misunderstood me entirely upon the subject of truth in works of fiction and art; and I think, if you refer to my letter, if you have it, you will find it so. I hold truth sacred everywhere, but

merely lamented over Schiller's departure from it in the instance of "Joan of Arc" more than in that of "Wallenstein."

It has been an annoyance to me to leave the Yellow Springs, independently of the hurried and disagreeable mode of our doing so. I like the country, which is really very pretty, and I have been almost happy once or twice while riding over those hills and through those valleys, with no influences about me but the holy and consolatory ministrings of nature.

My activity of temperament and love of system and order (perhaps you did not know that I possessed those last tendencies) always induce me to organize a settled mode of life for myself wherever I am, no matter for how short a space of time, and in the absence of nervous irritation or excitement, regular physical exercise, and steady intellectual occupation, always produce in me a (considering all things) wonderfully cheerful existence; . . . and my spirits, obedient to the laws of my excellent constitution, rise above my mental and sentimental ailments, and rejoice, like those of all healthy animals, in mere physical well-being. . . .

Good-bye, dear T——. Remember me most kindly to S——; and

Believe me always, yours very truly,

F. A. B.

Philadelphia, August 22nd, 1843.

MY DEAR T—,

I am not sure that cordial sympathy is not the *greatest* service that one human being can offer another in this woe-world. Certainly, without it, all other service is not worth accepting; and it is so strengthening and encouraging a thing to know one's self kindly cared for by one's kind, that I incline to think few benefits that we confer upon each other in this life are greater, if so great. . . .

The horrible heat, and the admonishing pallor that is again overspreading my poor children's cheeks, has led to a determination of again sending them out of town; and I heard yesterday that on Saturday next they are to go to the neighbourhood of West Chester. The fact of going out of town again is very agreeable to me on my own account, letting alone my sincere rejoicing that my children are to be removed from this intolerable atmosphere; but all this packing and unpacking which devolves upon me is very laborious and fatiguing, and the impossibility of obtaining any settled order in my life afflicts me unreasonably. . . .

Peccavi! The verses you mentioned are mine, and you certainly might have written much better ones for me in your sleep, if you had taken the least pains. They were indited as many as twenty years ago, and how Mr. Knickerbocker came possessed of them is a mystery to me. . . .

I want you to do me a favour, which I have been thinking to ask you all this week past, and was now just like to have forgotten. Will you ask John

O'Sullivan if he would care to have a review of Tennyson's Poems from me, for the *Knickerbocker*, and what he will give me for such review? I am compelled to be anxious for "compensation." Send me an answer to this inquiry, please; and believe me,

Very truly yours,

F. A. B.

P.S.—Lord Morpeth is a *lovely* man, and I love him.

Philadelphia, August 25th, 1843.

DEAR GRANNY,

A thousand thanks for your kind and comfortable letter, from the tone of which it was easy to see that you were "as well as can be expected," both body and soul. Indeed, my dearest Granny, it is true that we do not perceive half our blessings, from the mere fact of their uninterrupted possession. Of our health this seems to me especially true; and it is too often the case that nothing but its suspension or the sight of its deplorable loss in others awakens us to a sense of our great privilege in having four sound limbs and a body free from racking torture or enfeebling, wasting disease. As for me, what I should do without my health I cannot conceive. All my good spirits (and I have a wonderful supply, considering all things) come to me from my robust physical existence, my good digestion, and perfect circulation. Heaven knows, if my cheerfulness had not a good tough root in these, as long as these last, it would fare ill with me; and I fear my spiritual courage and mental energy would prove exceedingly weak in their en-

counter with adverse circumstances, but for the admirable constitution with which I have been blessed, and which serves me better than I serve myself. . . .

On the tenth of next month I am going up to the dear and pleasant hill-country of Massachusetts, to pay my friends a visit, which, though I must make it very short, will prove a most acceptable season of refreshment to my heart and spirit, from which I expect to derive courage and cheerfulness for the rest of the year, as I shall certainly not see any of them again till next spring, for they are about two hundred and fifty miles away from me, which, even in this country of quite unlimited space, is not considered exactly next-door neighbourhood.

You ask after "the farm," which is much honoured by your remembrance. It is let, and we are at present living in a boarding-house in town, and I rather think shall continue doing so; but I really do not know in the least what is to become of me from day to day. . . .

I am grieved to hear of the affliction of the Greys. Pray remember me very affectionately to Lady G. Her father's illness must be indeed a sore sorrow to her, devoted as she is to him.

My dear Granny, do not you be induced to *croak* about England. She may have to go through a sharp *operation* or two; but, depend upon it, that noble and excellent constitution is by no means vitally impaired, and she will yet head the nations of the earth, in all great and good and glorious things, for a long time to come, in spite of Irish rows and Welsh *consonants* (is there anything else in Wales? How funny a revolution must be without a vowel in it!) . . . I believe

that great and momentous changes are impending in England; and when I suggest among them as *possible* future events the doing away with the law of primogeniture, hereditary legislation, and the Church establishment, of course you will naturally say that I think England is going to the dogs, faster even than you do. But I think England will survive all her political changes, be they what they may, and, as long as the national character remains unchanged, will maintain her present position among the foremost peoples of the world; with which important and impressive prophecy comfort yourself, dear Granny.

We are going out of town, to which we returned a fortnight ago, to-morrow at half-past six in the morning, and it is now past midnight, and I have every mortal and immortal thing to pack, with my own single pair of hands, which is Irish, Lord bless us! So good night, dear Granny.

Believe me ever your affectionate

FANNY.

Philadelphia, August 25th, 1843.

You will pay no more, dear Hal, for this huge sheet of paper, being single, I believe, than for its half; and I do not see why I should cheat myself or you so abominably as by writing on such a miserable allowance as the half sheet I have just finished to you.

Mr. Furness's abolition sermons have thinned his congregation a little—not much. . . . There is no other Unitarian Church in Philadelphia, where the sect is looked upon with holy horror, pious commiseration, and Christian reprobation, but where, nevertheless,

Mr. Furness's own character is held in the highest esteem and veneration.

Your question about society here puzzles me a good deal, from the difficulty of making you understand the absolute absence of anything to which you would give that name. I do not think there is anything, either, which foreigners call *société intime* in Philadelphia. During a certain part of the year certain wealthy individuals give a certain number of entertainments, evening parties, balls, etc. The summer months are passed by most of the well-to-do inhabitants somewhere out of the city, generally at large public-houses, at what are called fashionable watering-places. Everybody has a street acquaintance with everybody; but I know of no such thing as the easy, intimate society which you seem to think inevitably the result of the institutions, habits, and fortunes in this country.

It does not strike me that social intercourse is easy at all here; the dread of opinion and the desire of conformity seem to me to give a tone of distrust and caution to every individual man and woman, utterly destructive of all freedom of conversation, producing a flatness and absence of all interest that is quite indescribable. I have hitherto always lived in the country, and mixing very little with the Philadelphians have supposed that the mere civil formality at which my intercourse with most of them stops short would lead necessarily to some more intimate intercourse if I ever lived in the city. I now perceive, however, that their communion with each other is limited to this exchange of morning visits, of course almost

exclusively among the women ; and that society, such as you and I understand it, does not exist here.

Yet, of course, there must be the materials for it, clever and pleasant men and women, and I had sometimes thought, when I foresaw the probability of our leaving our country house and establishing ourselves in the city, that I should find some compensation in the society which I hoped I might be able to gather about me ; . . . but I am now quite deprived of any such resource as any attempt of the kind might have produced, by my present position in a boarding-house, where I inhabit my bedroom, contriving, for sightliness' sake, to sleep on a wretched sofa-bed, that my room by day may look as decent and little encumbered as possible ; but where the presence of washhand-stand and toilette apparatus necessarily enforces the absence of visitors, except in public rooms open to everybody. . . . I have received a great many morning visits, and one or two invitations to evening parties, but I do not, of course, like to accept civilities which I have no means of reciprocating, and so I have as little to expect in the way of social recreation as I think anybody living in a large town can have. So much for your inquiries about my social resources in this country. Had I a house of my own in Philadelphia, I should not at all despair of gradually collecting about me a society that would satisfy me perfectly well ; but as it is, or rather, as I am, the thing is entirely out of the question.

Of the discomfort and disorder of our mode of life I cannot easily give you a notion, for you know nothing of the sort, and, until now, neither did I. The absence

of decent regularity in our habits and the slovenliness of our whole existence is peculiarly trying to me, who have a morbid love of order, system, and regularity, and a positive delight in the decencies and elegancies of civilized life.

God bless you, dear.

Your affectionate

FANNY.

Philadelphia, September 1st, 1843.

MY DEAR T——,

I know not how long your letter had been in Philadelphia, because I have been out of town, and in a place so difficult of access, that letters are seldom forwarded thither without being lost or delayed long enough to be only fit for losing.

I told you of our sudden removal from the Yellow Springs. In the succeeding fortnight, which we spent in town, the children began again to droop and languish, and grow pale, and it was determined to send them into the country again: rooms have been accordingly hired for us three miles beyond West Chester, which is seven miles from the nearest railroad station on the Columbia railroad, altogether about forty miles from town, but for want of regular traffic and proper means of conveyance an exceedingly tedious and unpleasant drive thence to the said farm. Here there is indeed pure air for the children, and a blessed reprieve from the confinement of the city; but so uncivilized a life for any one who has ever been accustomed to the usual decencies of civilization, that it keeps me in a constant state of amazement.

We eat at the hours and table of these worthy people, and I am a little starved, as I find it difficult to get up a dinner appetite before one o'clock in the day ; and after that nothing is known in the shape of food, but tea at six o'clock. We eat with *two-pronged iron forks* ; i.e. we who are "sophisticate," do. The more sensible Arcadians, of course, eat exclusively with their knives. The farming men and boys come in to the table from their work, without their coats and with their shirt-sleeves rolled up above their elbows ; and my own nursemaid, and the servant-of-all-work of the house, and any visitors who may look in upon our hostess, sit down with us promiscuously, to feed ; all which, I confess, makes me a little melancholy. It is nonsense talking about positive equality ; these people are sorry associates for me, and so, I am sure, am I for them.

To-day, I came to town to endeavour to procure some of the common necessities that we require ; table implements that we can eat with, and lights by which we may be able to pursue our occupations after dark.

I read your speech with great pleasure ; it was good in every way. I am glad you do not withdraw yourself from the field of action where your like are so much wanted. I cannot give up my hope and confidence in the institutions of your country ; they are the expectation of the world, and if the Americans themselves, by word or deed, proclaim their scheme of free government a failure, it seems to me that the future condition of the human race is ominously darkened, and that all endeavour after progress or improvement is a fruitless struggle towards an unattainable end. But

this is not so. Your people will yet prove it, and it will and must be through the influence and agency of worthy men like yourself, to whom fitly belongs the task of rallying this faithless people, flying from their standards in the great world-conflict. Call them back, such of you as have voices that can be heard; for your nation is the vanguard of the race, and if they desert their trust its degradation will be protracted for long years to come.

The despondency of some of your best men is deplorable, and the selfish discouragement in which they withdraw from the fight, giving place to public evil for the sake of their personal quiet, a fatal omen to the country. It is curiously unlike the spirit of Englishmen. Never, certainly, were good men and true so needed anywhere as here at this moment, when the noblest principles that men are capable of recognizing in the form of a government seem about to be cast down from the rightful supremacy your fathers gave them, and the light of freedom which they kindled to lighten the world extinguished in distrust and dismay.

God bless you and prosper you in every good work. Remember me most kindly to S——, and believe me always,

Yours very truly,
F. A. B.

Philadelphia, September 9th, 1843.

Your English is undoubtedly better than Cicero's Latin to me, my dear T——, inasmuch as I understand the one and not the other. I shall not stop on

my way through New York, on Monday, nor my way back, except to spend a Sunday in your city, when I shall be very glad to see S—— and you.

I am disappointed at the uncertainty you express about being in Lenox while I am there.

Can you ascertain for me whether the Harpers, the New York publishers, would be willing to publish a volume of *Fugitive Poems* for me, and would give me *anything* for them? If it is not too much trouble to ascertain this, it would be doing me a great service. . .

I write in haste, but remain ever yours,

F. A. B.

DEAR T——,

I shall not dine with you to-day for various, all good, reasons, and send you word to that effect, simply because it would not be so civil, either to S—— or you, to leave my excuse till the time when I should present myself.

I had hoped to have returned to Philadelphia with Mr. F—— this morning, but I am to remain till after Thursday, when we were to have given a dinner to Macready. He called this morning, however, and said he had another engagement for Thursday, so what will be done in the matter of our proposed entertainment to him I know not.

I hope your eyes are not the worse for that hateful theatre last night. You cannot imagine how that sort of thing, to which I was once so used, now excites and irritates my nerves. The music, the lights, the noise, the applause, the acting, the grand play itself, "*Macbeth*,"—it was all violent doses of stimulant; and

I begin to think my mental constitution is like gunpowder, only unignitable when in the water : I suppose that accounts for my affection for water, apart from fishing.

I have got the greatest quantity of letters to write, and must begin upon Tennyson, so I shall not want for occupation while I am kept here.

Yours ever truly,

F. A. B.

New York, September 26th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

I was up till past two o'clock last night, and up at 5.30 this morning : I have travelled half the day, from Philadelphia to New York, and shopped the rest of the day, and am now steaming up the Hudson to Albany, on my way to Lenox, where I am going to spend a few days with my friends, the Sedgwicks. Although I am very weary, and my eyes ache for want of sleep, I must write to you before I go to bed ; for once up in Berkshire, I shall have but little time to myself, and I would not for a great deal that the steamer should go to England without some word from me to you. . . . So here I am wandering up forlornly enough, with poor Margery for my attendant, who appears to me to be in the last stage of a consumption, and to whom this little excursion may perhaps be slightly beneficial, and will certainly be very pleasurable. . . . I shall in all probability see none of the Sedgwicks again for a year. . . .

I suppose, dear Hal, we are crossing the Tappansee (the broadest part of the Hudson River, where its

rapid current spreads from shore to shore into the dimensions of a wide lake), and the boat rocks so much that I feel sick, and must leave off writing and go to bed, after all. God bless you, dear. Good night.

Dearest Hal, this letter, which I had hoped to finish on board the Hudson night-boat, was cut short by my fatigue and the rocking of the vessel; and, as I expected, during my stay at Lenox, no interval of leisure was left me to do so. . . .

I sprained my ankle slightly, jumping from off a fence; and though I have carefully abstained from using my foot since I did so, it is still so weak that I am afraid of standing upon it much, and must consequently abide the results (invariable with me) of want of exercise, headache, sideache, and nervous depression and irritability. When I get to Philadelphia, if I am no better, I will hire a horse for a little while, and shake myself to rights.

God bless you, dear Hal. Good-bye.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

Philadelphia, October 10th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

How much I thank you for your generosity to me! for the watch you are sending me, which I have not yet received. I cannot value it more than I did that precious chain, the loss of which, happening at a time when I was every way most unhappy, really afflicted me deeply.

I hope nothing will happen to this new remembrance of yours and token of your love. I shall feel

most anxious till it arrives, and then I think I shall sleep with it round my neck, so great will be my horror of having it stolen from me, in this wretched and disorderly lodging-house, where, as it is, I am in perpetual misery lest I should have left any closet or drawer in my bedroom unfastened, and where we are obliged to lock our sitting-room if we leave it for a quarter of an hour, lest our property should be stolen out of it,—a state of anxious and suspicious caution which is as odious as it is troublesome. . . .

When I arrived in New York last Sunday morning, on my return from Berkshire, and was preparing to start for Philadelphia the next day, I found I was to stay in New York to meet and greet Mr. Macready, who had just landed in America, and to whom we are to give an entertainment at the Astor House, as we have no house in Philadelphia to which we can invite him. . . .

My next errand while I was out to-day, was to go and see a person who has thought proper to go out of her mind about me. She is poor and obscure, the sister of a tailor in this town; she had a little independence of her own, but lent it to the State of Pennsylvania, after the fashion of Sydney Smith, and has lost it, or at any rate the income of it, which, after all, is all that signifies to her, as she is no longer young and will probably not live to see the State grow honest, which its friends and well-wishers confidently predict that it will.

This poor woman is really and positively mad about me, as I think you will allow when I tell you that she is never happy when she sees me, unless she

has hold of my hand, *or my gown*; that she has bought a portrait of me by Sully, over which she has put a ducal coronet, as she says I am the *Duchess of Ormond*! It is really a serious effort of good nature in me to go and see her, for her crazy adoration of me is at once ludicrous and painful. But my visits are a most lively pleasure to her—she thanks me for coming with the tears in her eyes, poor thing; and it would be brutal in me to withhold from her a gratification apparently so intense, because to afford it her is irksome and disagreeable to me. Her name is N——, and she told me to-day (but that may have been only another demonstration of her craziness) that there was a large disputed inheritance in Ireland left to heirs unknown of that name; that the true heirs could not be found, and that she really believed she might be entitled to it if she only knew how to set about establishing her right. She is the daughter of an English or Irish man, and her family were well connected in England (I couldn't help thinking, while she was talking, of your and my uncle John's dear Guilford). What a curious thing it would be if this poor, obscure, old, ugly, half-insane woman were really entitled to such a property! She is tolerably well-educated too, a good French and Italian scholar, and a reader of obsolete books. She is a very strange creature.

I forget whether I told you that I had taken Margery up to Lenox with me, in the hope that the change of air and scene might be of benefit to her; but ever since her return she has been ill in her bed, poor thing! and though the only servant girl she had has left her, and she is in the most forlorn and wretched

condition possible, neither her mother nor her sisters have been near her to help or comfort her—such is the Roman Catholic horror of a divorced woman (for she has at length sued for and obtained her divorce from her worthless husband). And so, I suppose, they will let her die, such being, it seems, their notion of what is right. . . . Poor woman! her life has been one entire and perfect misery. . . .

God bless you, dear. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

Philadelphia, October 3rd, 1843.

MY DEAR T——,

I have just received, by Harnden's express, my Tennyson, which I had left at Lenox, and with it your old note, written to me while I was yet there, which the conscientious folk sent me down. It seems odd to read all your directions about my departure from the dear hill-country and my arrival in New York. How far swept down the current of time already seem the pleasant hours spent up there! You do not know how earnestly I desire to live up there. I do believe mountains and hills are kindred of mine—larger and smaller relations, taller and shorter cousins; for my heart expands and rejoices and beats more freely among them, and doubtless, in the days which "I can hardly remember" (as Rosalind says of her Irish Rat-ship), I was a bear, or a wolf, or what your people call a "panter" (*i.e.* a panther), or at the very least a wild cat, with unlimited range of forest and mountain. [The forests and hill-tops of that part of

Massachusetts had, when this letter was written, harboured, within memory of man, bears, panthers, and wild cats.] That cottage by the lake-side haunts me, and to be able to realize that day-dream is now certainly as near an approach to happiness as I can ever contemplate.

I am working at the Tennyson, and shall soon have it ready. Tell me, if you can, where and how I am to send it to John O'Sullivan.

Thank you, my dear T——, for your and S——'s civility to C—— H——. His people are excellent friends of mine, and you cannot conceive anything more disagreeable—painful to me, I might say—than the mortification I felt in receiving him in my present uncomfortable abode, and being literally unable to offer him a decent cup of tea.

It is an age since I saw Mr. G——, so can give you no intelligence of him. J—— C—— and the O——s form my *société intime*. They come and sit with me sometimes of an evening, otherwise *mon chez moi* is undisturbed and lonely enough. I walk a great deal every day, for the weather is lovely, and the blessed blue sky an inexhaustible source of delight and enjoyment to me.

To-morrow I am obliged to go out to the farm upon business. I shall go on horseback (upon the legs of my Tennyson article), and expect not only pleasure but profit from my old habitual exercise; but I would a little rather not be going *there* at all.

I went all over our town house yesterday. It is a fine house, and has an excellent garden, with quite large trees in it. It is let unfurnished for about half the

price which such a house in London would command. I confess it was rather a trial to return from looking at this large house of—*mine?* to the “Maison Vauquier” (see Balzac’s “Père Goriot”) which we inhabit.

Thank you for your offer of helping me with my review. I could not possibly think of using your eyes, precious and perilled as they are, instead of my own. I dare say I shall manage with my own translated acquaintance with Æschylus and Homer. However, and at any rate, if I find it necessary to *cram*, I will not do so by proxy.

Good-bye. Give my kindest love to S——. . . . How is Master C——? How is his voice? Has he worked out that problem yet about that vexed question on which he threw so much light at your house, and about which you were so tiresome? Seriously, that lad is a clever fellow; and I assure you we perpetrated some pretty profound metaphysics between your house and the Astor Hotel that wet Sunday evening.

Believe me yours truly,

F. A. B.

[The young gentleman alluded to in the above letter, who was visiting the United States, and had brought letters of introduction to my friends in New York, was the son of an old Yorkshire family, among whom had existed for several generations a passionate desire to *fly*, and a firm conviction that they could invent a machine which would enable them to do so. The last I heard of that young Icarus above mentioned was from two of his friends and companions, the sons of Mrs. Norton, who, standing with me above the

tremendous precipice called the Salto di Tiberio, which plunges from the edge of the rocks of Capri straight down into the Mediterranean, told me they had had all the difficulty in the world in preventing C—— from launching forth upon his flying machine from that stupendous pier into mid air, and quite as infallibly mid ocean. With infinite entreaties they finally persuaded him to send forth his machine, unfreighted with human life, on its experimental trip. He did so, and his bird, turning ignominious somersaults on its way, at length found a perch, and folded its wings on a hoary rock-anchored tree that stretched out an arm of succour to it above the abyss, and there, perhaps, it still roosts; and elsewhere, perhaps, its author is pursuing other flights.]

Philadelphia, Wednesday, May 15th, 1844.

DEAR MRS. JAMESON,

My last letter to you was pretty nearly filled with dismal private affairs, and now, Heaven knows, all residents in Philadelphia have a gloomy story to tell of public ones. We have had fearful riots here last week between the low American population and the imported population from Ireland, who have also taken the opportunity of the present anarchy and confusion to indulge in violent exhibitions of their own special home-brewed feud of Protestant against Catholic. A few nights ago there was a general mob-crusade against the Roman Catholic churches, several of which, as well as various private dwellings, were burnt to the ground. The city was lighted from river to river with the glare of these conflagrations—this city of “brotherly love;”

whole streets looking like pandemonium avenues of brass and copper in the lurid reflected light. Your people have lost little of their agreeable combined facetiousness and ferocity, as I think you will allow when I tell you that, while a large Catholic church was burning, the Orange party caused a band of music to play "Boyne Water;" and when the cross fell from above the porch of the building, these same Christian folk gave three cheers. "Where," I suppose you exclaim, "were the civil authorities and military force?" All on the ground of action, compelled to be idle spectators of these outrages, because they had no warrant to act, and could not shoot down the Sovereign People, even while committing them, without the Sovereign People's leave.

The popular jealousy of power, which always exists more or less under republican institutions, interferes not a little with the efficiency of an organized police, or other abiding check upon public effervescence. Rioters, therefore, in times of excitement have generally a fair start of the law, and are able to accomplish plenty of mischief before they can be prevented, because a powerful force of preventive police and municipal officers, invested with permanent authority, are abominations in the eyes of a free and independent American citizen.

As, however, by a very wholesome law, the city pays for all damages committed by public violence upon property, the whole population of the town will be taxed for the *spree* of these lively gentry; and under the pressure of this salutary arrangement, the whole militia turned out, all the decent citizens orga-

nized themselves into patrols and policemen, and by the time the riot had raged three days, and the city had incurred a heavy debt for burnt and pillaged property, a stop was put to the disorder. Cannon were planted round all the remaining Catholic churches to protect them; the streets were lined with soldiers; every householder was out on guard in his particular district during the night, and by dint of effectual but, unfortunately, rather tardy measures, order has been restored.

My own affairs are far from flourishing, and I am heartily glad to have anything else to speak of, little cheerful as the anything else may be. . . .

I hope all is well with you. Geraldine is almost a woman now, I suppose. I think of you much oftener than I write to you, and am

Ever yours,

FANNY.

May 20th, 1844.

No, my dearest Hal, the day is never long, but always short, even when I rise before six. . . . I have a vivid consciousness of an increased perception of the minor *goods* of existence, in the midst of its greatest evils, and things that till now have been mere enjoyments to me, now appear to me in the light of positive blessings.

My delight in everything beautiful increases daily, and I now count and appreciate the innumerable alleviations that life has in every twenty-four hours, even in its seasons of severest trial.

A spirit of greater thankfulness is often engendered

by suffering itself; it is one of the "sweet uses of adversity," and mitigates it immensely.

A beautiful flower was brought to me to-day; and while I remained absorbed in contemplating it, it seemed to me a very angel of consolatory admonition.

God bless you, dearest friend. How full of sources of comfort He has made this lovely woe-world!

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Philadelphia, Sunday, June 9th, 1844.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I am sure you will be sorry to hear of the accident which has befallen my poor little F——. She fell last week over the bannisters of the stairs, and broke her arm. The fracture was fortunately a simple one of the smaller bone of the arm, which, I suppose, in a little body of that sort, can hardly be much more than gristle. She is doing well, and, as she appears to have escaped all injury to the head, which was my first horrible apprehension, I have every reason to be thankful that the visitation has not been more severe. The accident occasioned me a violent nervous shock. I am now far from well myself, and I am pursued with debilitating feverish tendencies, which I vainly endeavour to get rid of. . . .

I am much puzzled, my dear Lady Dacre, what to say to you beyond this bulletin. My circumstances do not afford any great variety of cheerful topics for correspondence, and the past and the future are either painful or utterly uncertain.

I am studying German, in the midst of the small

facilities for mental culture which my present not very easy or happy position affords, and have serious thoughts of beginning to work at Euclid, and trying to make myself something of a mathematician. Possibly some knowledge of the positive sciences might be of use to me in my further dealings with the world; for the proper comprehension and appreciation of and judicious commerce with which some element, either natural or acquired, is undoubtedly wanting in me.

I have always wished very much that I had been made to study mathematics as a young person, and considering that Alfieri betook himself to Greek at forty-eight, I see no very good reason why I should not get at least as far as the *pons asinorum* at thirty-four.

I believe this latent hankering after mathematics has been a little fanned in me by reading De Quincey's letters to a young man upon the subject of a late education, which have fallen into my hands just now, and which so earnestly recommend the zealous cultivation of this species of knowledge.

I hope Lord Dacre is well. Pray remember me to him very affectionately, and tell him that I am afraid, in answer to his question, I must reply that the Americans in this part of the United States do not at present appear over-scrupulous about paying their debts. Their demonstrations towards England just now seem to me rather absurd. The "sensible" of the community (alas! nowhere the majority, but here at this moment a most pitiful minority) are of course ashamed of, and sorry for, what is going on; and, moreover, of course do not believe in a war. But I

am afraid, if the good sense of England does not keep this country out of a scrape, its own good sense will hardly do it that good turn.

An American wrote to me the other day: "As for our calling ourselves a great people, I think we are a people who, with the greatest possible advantages, have made the least possible use of them; and if anything can teach these people what greatness is, it must be adversity."

Farewell, and God bless you, my dear Lady Dacre.

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

Philadelphia, July 14th, 1844.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I am told that the newspapers in England have been filled with the severest comments upon the late outbreaks of popular disorder in this city of "brotherly love."

About a month ago the town was lighted from one end to the other with the burning of Catholic churches; and now, within the last week, the outrages have recommenced with more fury than ever, because, for a wonder, the militia actually did fire upon the mob, who, unused to any such demonstration of being in earnest on their part, had possessed themselves of cannon and fire-arms, and would have exterminated the small body of militia which could be gathered together at the first outbreak of the riot, but which is now backed by a very considerable force of regular troops.

The disturbance is not in the city proper, but in a

sort of suburb not subject to the municipal jurisdiction of Philadelphia, but having a mayor and civil officers of its own.

The cause assigned for all these outrages is fear and hatred of the Roman Catholic Irish ; and there is no doubt an intensely bitter feeling between them and the low native population of the cities ; added to which, the Irish themselves do not fail to bring over their home feud, and the old Orange spirit of bloody persecution joins itself to the dread of Popery, which is becoming quite a strong feeling among the American lower classes.

It is absurd, and yet sad enough, that not six months ago "Repeal Unions"—Irish Repeal Unions—were being formed all over this country in favour of, and sympathy with, the poor, oppressed Roman Catholics in Ireland ; "professional" politicians made their cause, and England's oppression of them, regular popularity capital ; writing and speechifying in the most violent manner, and with the most crass ignorance, upon the subject of their wrongs and the tyranny they endured from our government ; and now Philadelphia *flares* from river to river with the burning of Roman Catholic churches, and the Catholics are shot down in the streets and their houses pillaged in broad daylight.

The arrest of several of the ringleaders of the mob, and the arrival of large numbers of regular troops, have produced a temporary lull in the city ; but the spirit of lawless violence has been permitted to grow and strengthen itself in these people for some time past now ; and of course, as they were allowed, unchecked

and unpunished, to set fire to the property of the negroes, and to murder them without anybody caring what befell the persons or property of "damned niggers," the same turbulent spirit is now breaking out in other directions, where it is rather less agreeable to the *respectable* portion of the community, but where they will now find considerable difficulty in checking it; and, of course, if it is to choose its own objects of outrage and abuse, the *respectable* portion of the community may some day be disagreeably surprised by having to take their turn with the poor Roman Catholic Irish and the poor American negroes. The whole is a lamentable chapter of human weakness and wickedness, that would cast shame and scorn upon republican institutions if it were not that Christianity itself is liable to the same condemnation, judged by some of its apparent results.

You ask me if I apportion my time among my various occupations with the same systematic regularity as formerly. I endeavour to do so, but find it almost impossible. . . . I read but very little. My leisure is principally given to my German, in which I am making some progress. I walk with the children morning and evening; I still play and sing a little at some time or other of the day, and write interminable letters to people afar off, who I wish were nearer. I walk before breakfast with the children, *i.e.* from seven till eight. Three times a week I take them to the market to buy fruit and flowers, an errand that I like as well as they do. The other three mornings we walk in the square opposite this house. After breakfast they leave me for the morning, which they

now pass with their governess or nurse. For the last two months I have ridden every day, but have unhappily disabled my horse for the present, poor fellow ! by galloping him during a sudden heavy rain-shower over a slippery road, in which process he injured one of his hip-joints, not incurably, I trust, but so as to deprive me of him for at least three months. [My dear and noble horse never recovered from this injury, but was obliged to be shot. He had been sold, and I had ransomed him back by the publication of a small volume of poems, which gave me the price demanded for him by the livery-stable keeper who had bought him ; but the accident I mention in this letter deprived me of him. He was beautiful and powerful, high-spirited and good-tempered, almost a perfect creature, and I loved him very much.]

I shall now walk after breakfast, as, my rides being suppressed, my walks with the chicks are not exercise enough for me. After that, I prepare for my German lesson (which I take three times a week) and write letters. I take the children out again at half-past six, and at half-past seven come in to my dinner ; after dinner I go to my piano, and generally sit at it or read until I go to bed, which I do early,—*et voilà !*

Almost all the people I know are out of town now, and I do not see a human creature ; the heat is intense and the air foul and stifling, and we are gasping for breath and withering away in this city atmosphere. . . .

God bless you, dear Hal.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

[In the autumn of 1845 I returned to England, and resided with my father in Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square, until I went to Italy and joined my sister at Rome; a plan for my returning with my father to America having been entertained and abandoned in the mean time.]

Mortimer Street, October 3rd, 1845.

Heaven be praised, my American letters are finished!—eleven long ones, eleven shillingsworth. I am sure somebody (but at this moment I don't rightly know who) ought to pay me eleven shillings for such a batch of work. So now I have nothing to do but answer your daily calls, my dearest Hal, which "nothing," as I write it, looks like a bad joke. If you expect me, however, to write you a long letter on the heels of that heavy American budget, you deceive yourself, my dear friend, and the truth is not in you.

In the first place, I have nothing to say except that I am well and intensely interested by everything about me. I am very sorry to have neglected sending you "Arnold" [his *Life*, just published at that time], but it shall be done this day.

London, with its distracting quantity of *things to do*, is already laying hold of me; and the species of vertigo which I experience after my lonely American existence, at finding myself once more overwhelmed with visits, messages, engagements, and endless notes to read and answer, is pitiable. I feel as if I had been growing idiotic out there, my life here is such an amazing contrast.

I had a visit yesterday from dear old Lady Charlotte Lindsay, who was exceedingly kind and cordial indeed to me. We said many good words about you. After she was gone, the old Berry sisters (who still hang on the bush) tottered in, and I felt touched to the heart by the affectionate sympathy and kind goodwill exhibited towards me by these three very old and charming ladies.

I had a delightful dinner yesterday at Milman's, where I met Lady Charlotte again, Harness, Lockhart, Empson, and several other clever pleasant people.

To-day I carried my last six American despatches myself to the post, and then trotted all the way up to Horace Wilson's, to see him and my cousin Fanny, by way of exercise. . . .

I am going to dine to-day with Sir Edward Codrington—the admiral, you know. He and his family are old friends of mine; he has been here twice this week, sitting two hours at a time with me, spinning long yarns about the battle of Navarino and all the to-do there was about it. He actually brought me a heap of manuscript papers on the subject to look over, which, quite contrary to my expectation, have interested me very much.

To-morrow, at three o'clock, my maid and I depart for the Hoo; as we go per coach, and the distance is only twenty-five miles, I hope that journey won't ruin me.

My father has just come home from Brighton, instead of remaining there till Monday, as he had intended; he said he felt himself getting fatigued, and therefore thought it expedient to come away. He

has caught a slight rheumatic pain in one of his shoulders, but otherwise seems well. To-morrow I will send you another bulletin.

Your affectionate

FANNY.

Mortimer Street, October, 1845.

Since beginning this letter, my beloved Hal, I have been reading Channing's sermon upon Dr. Follen's death. It is, in fact, a sermon upon human suffering, in a paroxysm of which I was when I began to write to you; and for a remedy, took up this sermon, which has comforted me much.

Chorley was expressing to me, two days ago, his unbounded veneration for the character of Dr. Follen, as it is faintly and imperfectly represented in the memoir which his wife published of him. I knew that I had with me Channing's sketch of him in that sermon on human suffering, and told Chorley that I would look for it for him. I found it yesterday, and merely read that part of it towards the end which referred to Dr. Follen's character; and it is to that circumstance that I attribute a dream I had last night, in which I sat devoutly at *Arnold's* feet, expressing to him how earnestly I had desired the privilege of knowing him: he was surrounded by Channing, Follen, and others whom I could not remember. In reading to-day the whole of that fine discourse of Channing's, I was led to compare the great similarity of the expressions he uses, in speaking of sceptics and scepticism, to those Arnold makes use of on the same subjects in his letters to Lady Francis Egerton. For instance, "Scepticism is a

moral disease, the growth of some open or latent depravity; deliberate, habitual questionings of God's benevolence argue great moral deficiency." Another thing that struck me was the resemblance between Dr. Arnold and Dr. Follen in the matter of independent self-reliance. Channing says of the latter, "He was singularly independent in his judgments. He was not only uninfluenced by authority, and numbers, and interest, and popularity; but by friendship, and the opinions of those he most loved and honoured. He seemed almost too tenacious of his convictions."

Do you remember what Sydney Smith says of Francis Horner? This great firmness of opinion in Arnold and Follen reminds me of it by contrast: "Francis Horner was a very modest person, which men of great understanding seldom are. It was his habit to confirm his opinion by the opinions of others, and often to form them from the same source."

Mortimer Street, November, 1845.

DEAR EMILY,

During that hour that we spent at Netley, the last few moments of which were made full of hopeful thoughts by the passing away of the visible clouds from the visible sky, I could not but reflect upon the glorious stability of things spiritual, contrasted with the mutability and evanescence of things temporal. Our hearts, which are united by *real* bonds—the love of truth, the fear of God, and the desire of duty—have remained so united through all these years of absence and distance from each other; and when I thought of our former visit to Netley, I remembered that nothing

had failed me but that which could not be abiding and steadfast, for it was not good.

To tell you how thence my soul wandered to the eventual reclaiming of all who have strayed from righteousness, and the possible reunion, in the immeasurable future, of souls which have been sundered here because of sin, and the final redemption of all God's poor erring children, would be to attempt to utter one of those rapid, deep, and ineffable actions of our spirits which are too full of hope, of faith, and the holiest peace, for words to be meant to express them.

Mortimer Street, Thursday, 6th, 1845.

DEAREST HAL,

My father came home yesterday afternoon from Brighton. He said he was getting a little tired of his work, and complained of a touch of rheumatism in his shoulder. . . . He is making arrangements to read at Highgate next week. Harry Chester, some cousin or connection of Emily's, and a quondam kind friend of mine, is at the head of some institution at Highgate, and has been in negotiations with him for three readings at some public hall or lecture-room there. My father is to read there three times, and is to dine each time at some friend's house. Mr. Chester very kindly begged me to accompany him, and dine with them. . . .

I dined at Sir Edward Codrington's yesterday, and was there introduced to a charmingly pretty Mrs. Bruce, formerly Miss Pitt, one of the queen's maids-of-honour; and I assure you my edification was considerable at some of her courtly experiences. . . .

I believe Solomon says that "in the multitude of counsellors is safety;" it does not seem so with me just now, for in my multitude of counsels and counsellors I find only utter bewilderment.

Until Monday I shall be at the Hoo, where you can address me, "To the care of Lord Dacre, the Hoo, Welwyn, Herts."

God bless you, dearest Hal. Give my kind love to Dorothy.

Yours ever,
FANNY.

[The days were not yet, either in England or America, when a married woman could claim or hold, independently, money which she either earned or inherited. How infinite a relief from bitter injustice and hardship has been the legislation that has enabled women to hold and own independently property left to them by kindred or friends, or earned by their own industry and exertions. I think, however, the excellent law-makers of the United States must have been intent upon atoning for all the injustice of the previous centuries of English legislation with regard to women's property, when they framed the laws which, I am told, obtain in some of the States, by which women may not only hold bequests left to them, and earnings gained by them, entirely independent of their husbands; but being thus generously secured in their own rights, are still allowed to demand their maintenance, and the payment of their debts, by the men they are married to. This seems to me beyond all right and reason—the compensation of one gross in-

justice by another, a process almost *womanly* in its enthusiastic unfairness. It must be retrospective amends for incalculable former wrongs, I suppose.]

Mortimer Street, November 17th, 1845.

When I consider that this is the third letter I write to you this blessed day, dear Hal, I cannot help thinking myself a funny woman; and that if you are as fond of me as you pretend to be, you ought to be much obliged to the "streak of madness" which compels me to such preposterous epistolary exertions.

And so because the sea rages and roars against the coast at St. Leonard's, and appals your eyes and ears there, my dearest Hal, you think we had better not cross the Atlantic now. But the storms on that tremendous ocean are so *local*, so to speak, that vessels steering the same course and within comparatively small distance of each other, have often different weather and do not experience the same tempests. Moreover, Mrs. Macready has just been here, who tells me that her husband crossed last year rather earlier than I did, in October, and had a horrible passage; and the last time I came to England we sailed on the 1st of December, and had a long but by no means bad voyage. There is no certainty about it, though, to be sure, strong probability of unfavourable weather at this season of the year. . . .

I told you that I had got off dining at the L——s' to-day, by pleading indisposition, which is quite true, for I am very unwell. I shall remain dinnerless at home, which is no great hardship, and one for which

I dare say I shall be none the worse. My father talks of going to Brighton this week, and then I shall scatter myself abroad in every direction. . . .

My father leaves town on Wednesday, and as he is to be absent two or three weeks, I suppose he will only return in time to sail.

I have written to Mrs. Grote to say I will come to Burnham on Thursday, and my present plan is to remain there until Monday next, and probably then go to the Hoo. The Grevilles, Charles and Henry, have been here repeatedly; they are both of them now gone out of town. I called to-day on Mrs. O'Sullivan, and there I found Dr. Holland, with whom I had one more laugh upon the subject of his never reaching Lenox after all dear Charles Sumner's efforts to get him there. [Dr. Holland, while in America, had made various unsuccessful attempts to visit the Sedgwick family in Berkshire, winding up with a failure more ludicrous than all the others, under the guidance of his, their, and my friend, Charles Sumner.] . . .

I have had a most affectionate note of welcome from Mrs. Jameson, and am rather in terror of her advent, as I feel considerable awkwardness about her various late passages-at-arms with my sister. Mrs. Macready came to see me this afternoon, and told me that she heard I was about to return forthwith to America. . . .

Now, dear, I think I have really done my duty by you to-day. God bless you. Give my affectionate love to the "good angel" [Miss Wilson]. As for your "roaring sea," I only wish I was in it just where you are (nowhere else, though). I am not well, and very

much out of spirits; disgusted, and, I have no doubt, disgusting; but, nevertheless,

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Arnold's Christianity puzzles me a little. He justifies litigation between men and war between nations. Whenever I set about carrying out my own Christianity I shall do neither; for I do not believe either are according to Christ's law.

I called on the Miss Hamiltons to-day, and we talked "some" of you. I have had another most affectionate note from Lizzie Mair, entreating me to go to Edinburgh. But oh! my dear Hal, the money? *Che vita!*

Mortimer Street, Thursday, 20th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

There is another thing that makes me pause about coming to Hastings—the time for my departure for America will be drawing very near when I return to town on Monday from Mrs. Grote's, which is the only visit that I shall have it in my power to pay. . . .

Tuesday is the 25th. I must see my brother John again before I go. This will take two days and one night, and my father talks of going down to Liverpool on the 2nd or 3rd, so that I could only run down to Hastings for a few miserable hours, again to renew all the pain of bidding you another farewell. . . .

I left off here to get my breakfast. We have lowered the price and the quality of our tea, in consequence of which, you see, my virtue and courage are

also deteriorated [Miss S—— used to say that a cup of good tea was *virtue* and *courage* to her], and this is why I feel I had perhaps better not come to Hastings.

Thus far, my dearest Harriet, when your letter of the 19th—yesterday (you see I did look at the date)—was brought to me. It is certainly most miserable to consider what horrible things men contrive to make of the mutual relations which might be so blest. I do not know if I am misled by the position from which I take my observations, but it seems to me that one of the sins most rife in the world is the *misuse*, or *disuse*, of the potent and tender ties of relationship and kindred.

With regard to coming to you, my dear Hal, I am much perplexed. I have made Mrs. Grote enter into arrangements to suit me, which I do not think I ought now to ask her to alter. Old Rogers is going down to Burnham, to be with me there, going and coming with me; and with what I feel I ought and must do to see my brother, I know not what I can and may do to see you, my dear friends. I am full of care and trouble and anxiety, and feel so weary with all the processes of thinking and feeling, deliberating and deciding, that I am going through, that I must beg you to determine for me. If you, upon due consideration, say "Come," I will come. And forgive me that I put it thus to you, but I have a sense of mental incapacity, amounting almost to imbecility; and I feel, every now and then, as if my brain machinery was running down, and would presently stop altogether. Seriously, what with the greater and the less, the unrest of body and

the disquiet of mind, I feel occasionally all but distracted. . . .

I will write you more when I answer your letter of this morning.

God bless you, my dearest friend. . . .

I have so much to say to you about Arnold, but shall perhaps forget it. Is it not curious that reading his thoughts and words should have tended to strengthen in me a conviction of duty upon a point where he appears to take an absolutely different view from mine?—that of seeking and obtaining redress from wrong by an appeal to processes of litigation and legal tribunals; but the earnestness of his exhortations to the conscientious pursuit of one's individual convictions of duty, was powerful in making me cleave to my own perception and sense of right, though it brought me to a conclusion diametrically opposite to his own.

This, however, is often the case. The whole character of a good man has vital power over one, even where his special opinions are different from one's own, and may even appear to one mistaken.

The abiding spirit of a man's life, more than his special actions and peculiar theories, is that by which other men are moved and admonished. I have extreme faith in the potency of this species of influence, and comparatively less in the effect of example, in special cases and particular details of conduct. Christ's teaching was always aimed at the spirit which should govern us, not at its mere application to isolated instances; and to those who sought advice from Him for application to some special circumstance He invariably

answered with a deep and broad rule of conduct, leaving the conscience of the individual to apply it to the individual case; and it seems to me the only way in which we can exhort each other is by the love of truth, the desire of right, the endeavour after holiness, which may still be ours, and to which we may still effectually point our fellow-pilgrims, even when we ourselves have fallen by the wayside under the weight of our own infirmities; failures, and sins.

See! I intended to have broken off when I wrote "God bless you." How I have preached on! But I have much more to say yet. Dear love to Dorothy.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

Friday, November 21st, 1845.

The *Hibernia* is in, the *Great Britain* is in, and I have had my letters, . . . not a few of them from various indifferent people, who want me to do business and attend to their affairs for them here. Truly I am in a plight to do so every way. One man wants me to exert the influence which he is sure *my intimacy with Mr. Bunn* (!) must give me to have an opera of his brought out at Drury Lane; another writes to me that "my family's well-known interest in the *theatres*" (a large view of the subject) "must certainly enable me to have a play of his produced at one of them;" and so forth, and so on.

All these people will think me a wretch, of course, because I cannot do any of the things they want me to do; moreover, no power of human explanation will suffice hereafter to make them aware that I am not

upon terms of affectionate intimacy with Mr. Bunn, that no member of my family has now any interest whatever in any theatre whatever, and that I have been so overwhelmed with anxieties and troubles of my own as to make my attention to the production of operas and plays and such-like things quite impossible just now.

The strangest part of all this is that these men write to me, desiring me to commend that which I think bad, and that which, moreover, they know that I think bad; but they seem to imagine that some effort of sincere friendship and kindness on my part is all that is necessary to induce me, in spite of this, to recommend and heartily to praise what I hold to be worthless.

Friendship with eyes and ears and a conscience is, I believe indeed, for the most part, and for the purposes of most people, tantamount to no friendship at all, or perhaps rather to a mild form of enmity.

Do you not think it is rather farcical on your part to request me to answer your letters, when you know 'tis as much as my place (in creation) is worth not to do so, and that, moreover, every day's post brings me that which impresses the sufficiency of each day's *allotments* devoutly to my mind? Did I ever *not* answer your letters, you horrid Harriet? My dear Hal, in spite of the last which I received from you, after I had just concluded a very long one to you, bearing date November 20th (there now! you see I remember the date even of my yesterday's letter!), I still wish for another deliberate expression of your opinion about my coming down to Hastings. That you

desire it, in spite of all considerations, I know. What your judgment is, now that I have laid all considerations before you, I should like to know. . . .

To-day was appointed for my visit to Mrs. Grote, and Rogers was to have come for me at one o'clock, to go to the Paddington railroad, near the Ten-Mile Station, on which she lives; but lo and behold, just as I was completing my preparations, comes an express to say that Mrs. Grote had been seized with one of her neuralgic headaches, and could not possibly receive us till to-morrow! so there ended the proposed business of the day.

I had a visit from John O'Sullivan, a call from Rogers to readjust our plans for to-morrow, and a very kind long visit from Milman. . . . I receive infinite advice on all hands about my perplexed affairs, all of it most kindly meant, but little of it, alas! available to me. Some of it, indeed, appears to me so worldly, so false, and so full of compromise between right and wrong for the mere sake of expediency; sometimes for cowardice, sometimes for peace, sometimes for pleasure, sometimes for profit, sometimes for mere social consideration,—the whole system (for such it is) accepted and acknowledged as a rule of life—that, as I sit listening to these friendly suggestions, I am half the time shocked at those who utter them, and the other half shocked at myself for being shocked at people so much my betters. . . . My abiding feeling is that I had better go back to my beloved Lenox, to the side of the "Bowl" (the Indian name of a beautiful small lake between Lenox and Stockbridge), among the Berkshire hills, where selfishness and moral

cowardice and worldly expediency exist in each man's practice no doubt quite sufficiently ; but where they are not yet universally recognized as a social system, by the laws of which civilized existence should be governed. You know, "a bad action is a thousand times preferable to a bad principle."

Among the other things which the American mail brought me was a charming sketch by my friend W——, of the very site upon which we settled that I should build my house. The drawing is quite rough and unfinished, but full of suggestion to one who knows the place.

I went by appointment this afternoon to see Lady Dacre. Poor thing ! she was much overcome at the sight of me. Her deep mourning for her young grandchild, and her pathetic exclamations of almost self-reproach at her own iron strength and protracted old age, touched me most deeply. She seemed somewhat comforted at finding that I had not grown quite old and haggard, and talked to me for an hour of her own griefs and my trials.

She and Lord Dacre pressed me with infinite kindness to go down to them at the Hoo ; and though I felt that if we sail on the 4th I ought to be satisfied with having had this glimpse of them, if my stay were prolonged I should like very much to go there for a short time.

Lord Dacre told me that the *Great Western* had arrived yesterday, and brought most threatening news of the hostile spirit of America about the Oregon question ; he fears there will certainly be a war. Good God, how horrible ! The two foremost nations of

Christendom to disgrace themselves and humanity by giving such a spectacle to the world!

After my visit to the Dacres, I came back to my solitary dinner in Mortimer Street; and, reflecting upon many things during this lonely evening, have wished myself between you and dear Dorothy, who neither of you tell falsehoods or pretend to like things and people that you dislike. Wouldn't it be a nice world if one could live all one's time with none but the best good people? I have spent the whole evening in reading my friend Charles Sumner's Peace Oration, which I only began in America; and in listening to the lady playing on the piano next door, and envying her. Our landlord has a piano in his room downstairs, I find, and he is not at home: now, that is a real temptation of the very devil. How I should like to pay half an hour's visit to it!

My dear Hal, Mrs. Jameson is coming to see me to-morrow morning! What shall I do—what shall I say about her *tiff* with Adelaide? Wasn't it a pity that Mrs. Grote was taken ill this morning?

God bless you. I want to say one or two words to dear Dorothy, according to right, for she has written to me in your two last letters.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Oh, I do wish I was with you! for you are not in the least base, mean, cowardly, or worldly.

DEAREST GOOD ANGEL,

Do not fancy, from the vehemence of my style to Harriet, that I am in a worse mental or material condition than I am. I only do hope that before I have lived much longer it will please God to give me grace to love and admire the great bulk of my fellow-creatures more than I do at present. *Certainly*, dear Dorothy, if I should remain in England, I will come down to Hastings for a fortnight; and owe my subsistence for that time to you and Hal. Perhaps these rumours of wars may make some difference in my father's plans. I should be very happy with you both. I have a notion that you would spoil me as well as Hal, and, used to that as I used to be "long time ago," it would be quite an agreeable novelty now.

Ever yours affectionately,

FANNY.

Friday, November 21st, 1845.

This letter was begun yesterday evening, my beloved Hal. My nerves are rather in a quieter state than when I wrote last, thanks to a warm bath and cold head-douche, which, taken together, I recommend to you as beneficial for the brain and general nervous system. . . .

I am going to dine *tête-à-tête* with Rogers; I have persuaded him to come down with me to Burnham. Poor old man! he is very much broken and altered, very deaf, very sad. This last year has taken from him Sydney and Bobus Smith; and now, the day before yesterday, his old friend, Lady Holland, died,

and he literally stands as though his "turn" were next—it may be mine.

Do you know, that in reading that striking account of Arnold's death, I got such a pain in my heart that I felt as if I was going to die so. *So!* So, indeed, God grant I might die! but none can die so who has not so lived.

Two things surprise me in Arnold's opinions—three,—his detailed account of wars between nations without any expression of condemnation of war, but rather a soldierly satisfaction in strife and strategy. This, by-the-by, my friend Charles Sumner notices with regret in his "Peace Oration." Then Arnold's apparent approbation of men, even clergymen, going to law for their rights, while at the same time speaking with detestation of the legal profession, which surely involves some inconsistency. Clergymen, according to the vulgar theory, are imagined to be, if not less resentful in spirit, at any rate more pacific in action than the laity, and ought, to my thinking, no more to go to law than to war. The third thing that puzzles me is his constant reference to what he calls a Church, or "*the Church*," which, with his views about Christianity, is a term that I do not comprehend.

It is curious to me to see Emily's marks along the margin. They are the straight ones, and are applied zealously everywhere to passages of dogmatical discussion about doctrines. Mine you will find the crooked ones, and my pencil, of course, invariably flew to the side of what expressed moral excellence and a perception of material beauty. Those passages that Emily has marked I do not understand—does she? I

ask this in all simplicity, and not at all in arrogance ; for I cannot make head or tail of them. Perhaps she can make both, for I think she has a taste and talent for theological controversy. I was surprised to find she had not marked his diary and journals at all ; I hardly knew how to leave them *unmarked* at all. Those Italian journals of his made me almost sick with longing. It is odd that this southern mania should return upon me so strongly after so many years of freedom from it, merely because there seemed to arise just now a possibility of this long-relinquished hope being fulfilled. I know that I could not live in Italy, and I suppose that I should be dreadfully offended and grieved by the actual state of the people, in the midst of all the past and present glory and beauty, which remains a radiant halo round their social and political degradation. But I did once so long to live in Italy, and I have lately so longed to see it, that these journals of Arnold's have made me cry like a child with yearning and disappointment.

My brother John told me that, in his opinion, Arnold was not entirely successful as a trainer of young men : that the power and peculiarity of his own character were such that, in spite of his desire that his pupils should be free, independent, and individual, they involuntarily became more or less mental and moral imitations of him : that he turned out nothing but young Arnolds—copies, on a reduced scale, of himself ; few of them, if any, as good as the original. This involuntary conformity to any powerful nature is all but inevitable, where veneration would consciously and deliberately lead to imitation, and thus those minds

which would most willingly leave freedom to others, both as a blessing and a duty, become unintentionally compelling influences to beget and perpetuate, in those around them, a tendency to subservience and dependency.

Charles Greville seems very much amused at my enthusiasm for Arnold, and still more when I told him that, for Arnold's sake, I wished to know Bunsen. He said he was sure I should not like him. Rogers told me the same thing; . . . that Arnold was a man easily to be taken in by any one who would devote themselves to him, which he—Rogers—said Bunsen did when they met abroad. . . . How much of this is true, God only knows: Rogers is often very cynical and ill-natured (alas, he has lived so long, and known so much and so many!) It may not be true; though, again, Arnold "was but a man as other men are," and went but upon two legs, like the best of them; nevertheless, if I were to remain in England, I would make some effort to know his chosen friend. Rogers, with whom I dined yesterday, told me that if he had known this wish of mine, he would have asked Bunsen to meet me. I then questioned him about Whately, and he said I should be delighted with him—perhaps, dear H., because he is a little mad, you know, and I appear to some of my friends here to have that mental accomplishment in common with other more illustrious folk.

And now, I have finished that book, Arnold's Life, by his spiritual son. It has been to me, in the midst of all that at present harasses and disgusts me, a source of peace and strength, and I have taken

it up hour after hour, like the antidote to the petty poisons of daily life. . . .

I have had two notes from Lady Dacre about arranging hours to meet ; but, unfortunately, the little time I have is so taken up that it will be impossible for me to see her, as she begs me, this morning. They leave town again on Saturday, and I do not suppose that it will be in my power to get down again to the Hoo, which she urges me very much to do, . . . so that I fear I shall not see her before I go, which is a grief to me.

John O'Sullivan does not sail till the 4th, and if we go then, I shall feel that my father will have somebody who will humanely look after him on board ship when I am disabled. . . . I think he has now some intention of making the expedition for the sake of giving readings, and perhaps of acting again, in the principal cities of the United States, and, apart from my interest and affairs, this may be a sufficient motive for his undertaking the voyage.

I am going to write a word to the dear good angel, and therefore, my beloved Hal, farewell. . . .

[I have not endorsed my brother's opinion about Arnold's influence on his pupils. Long after this letter was written, I had the honour and advantage of making the acquaintance of Baron Bunsen, and was able to judge for myself of the value of the opinions I had heard of him.]

MY DEAREST DOROTHY,

. . . I shall hold my mind and body in readiness to come down on Wednesday, if up till

Monday you still wish for me. I have told Hal all I have to tell of myself, and she may tell you as much of it as she pleases. . . .

Just after my father's departure, I received a very kind invitation from my friend Lady M——, who is staying in Brighton, to come and remain with her while my father was there. . . .

God bless you, dear Dorothy. I love you more than I seem to know you, but I know that you are good, and most good to my dear Harriet, and that I am

Yours very affectionately,

FANNY.

Mortimer Street, Tuesday, November 25th, 1845. }

DEAREST HAL,

I had a letter yesterday from my father, from Brighton. . . . He has renounced the project of crossing the Atlantic at present. . . .

Of course, dear Hal, we are none of us half patient enough. Suffering and injustice are so intolerable to us, that we *will* not endure them, and forget all the time that God allows and endures them.

You ask me if I recollect my discussion with you going down to Southampton. Very well, my dear Hal, and your appearance especially, which, in that witch's travelling-cap of yours, is so extremely agreeable to me that you recur to me in it constantly, and as often I execrate your bonnet. How much I do love beauty! How I delight in the beauty of any one that I love! How thankful I am that I am not beautiful! my self-love would have known no bounds.

I am writing with a very bad pen. I told you of

that pen Rogers mended for me, and sitting down to try it, wrote the two following lines, which he gave me, of Cowper's:—

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”

You will understand that this touched me much. You hope that my nerves will have leisure to become tranquillized in the country; but the intellectual life by which I am surrounded in England is such a contrast to my American existence, that it acts like a species of perpetual intoxication. The subjects of critical, literary, and social interest that I constantly hear so ably and brilliantly discussed, excite my mind to a degree of activity that seems almost feverish, after the stagnant inertia to which it has been latterly condemned; and this long-withheld mental enjoyment produces very high nervous excitement in me too. The antagonism I often feel at the low moral level upon which these fine intellectual feats are performed, afterwards causes a reaction from my sense of satisfaction, and sometimes makes that appear comparatively worthless, the power, skill, and dexterity of which concealed the sophistry and seduced me while the debate was going on.

My dearest H——, I wrote all this at Burnham. You will see by this that we do not leave England by the next steamer, and I think there is every probability of my remaining here for some time to come, and, therefore, spending a full fortnight with you at Hastings. . . .

I have a quantity to say to you about everything, but neither time nor room. We had much talk about

Arnold at the Beeches, and the justice dealt him by a cynical poet, a hard-headed political economist, a steeled man of the world, and two most dissimilar unbelievers, was various and curious.

Yours ever,
FANNY.

Mortimer Street, November 26th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I expect my father home to-day; but, as I have written to you, his note from Brighton expressed no annoyance at my determination. . . .

I must see if I cannot possibly write something for a few pence, so as not to stretch out a beggar's hand even to him. . . . I enjoyed my visit to Burnham extremely: the admirable clever talk, the capital charming music, the delight of being in the country, and the ecstasy of a fifteen miles' ride through beautiful parks and lanes, filled my time most pleasurably. I know no one who has such a capacity (that looks as if I had written *rapacity*—either will do) for enjoyment, or has so much of it in mere life—when I am not being tortured—as I have. I ought to be infinitely thankful for my elastic temperament; there never was anything like it, but the lady heroine of Andersen's story, "The Ball," who had "cork in her body."

We had much talk about Arnold and Bunsen, much about Sydney Smith, several of whose letters Mrs. Grote gave us to read. Rogers read them aloud, and his comments were very entertaining, especially with the additional fun of Mrs. Grote holding one of

the letters up to me in a corner alone, when I read, "I never think of death in London but when I meet Rogers," etc.

I have written a very long letter to my sister to-day, and one to E——. I am going to dine with Mrs. Procter, to meet Milnes, whose poetry you know I read to you here one evening, and you liked it, as I do, some of it, very much. . . . As for L——, I think one should be a great deal cleverer than he is to be so amazingly conceited, *and of course, if one was, one wouldn't be*; and if that sentence is not lovely, neither is "Beaver hats." ("Beaver hats is the best that *is*, for a shower don't hurt 'em, the least that *are*," quoth an old countrywoman to Mrs. Fitz-Hugh, comparing the respective merits of beaver and straw.)

Only think, Hal, what an enchanting man this landlord of ours must be! He has had his pianoforte tuned, and actually proposes sending it up into one of these rooms for my use. I incline to think the difficulty with him is not so much having a woman in the house, as a natural desire to receive a larger compensation if he takes this woman—me—in.

God bless you, dear. I feel happy in the almost certain prospect of being with you before very long, and you cannot imagine how much my heart is lightened by the more hopeful circumstances in which I think I am placed. . . .

Good-bye, dear Hal. Give my love to Dorothy, and believe me,

Ever yours,
FANNY.

November 29th, 1845.

I have just returned home from a dinner at Mrs. Procter's. It is a quarter to twelve o'clock, and until twelve I will write to you, my dear Hal. I found your ink-bottle on my table. Thank you. This is my birthday. Did you give it me on that account? —a compliment to the anniversary. I have not written so much as usual to you these last few days; my time is very much taken up; for, even at this dead season of the year, as it is called in London, I have many morning visitors, who come and sit with me a long while, during which time no letters get written. I wrote to you last on Wednesday, the day on which my father was to come to town. At one o'clock, accordingly, he marched in, looking extremely well, kissed me, opened his letters, wrote me a cheque for £10, and at five o'clock went off to Brighton again, telling me he should remain there until next Monday week, and, in the mean time, bidding me "*amuse myself*," and make myself as comfortable as I could." . . .

It is past twelve now, and I am getting tired; the late hours and good dinners and wine and coffee are a wonderful change in my American habits of life, and seem to me more pleasant than wholesome, after the much simpler mode of existence to which I have become accustomed latterly. I took a good long walk on Friday, across the Green Park and St. James's Park to Spring Gardens, and up the Strand to Coutts', and home again. . . .

I had a pleasant dinner yesterday at Lady Essex's. Rogers took me there, and brought me home in his carriage; he is exceedingly kind to me. Henry

Greville dined with us, sat by me, and talked to me the whole time about my sister, which was very pleasant and did me good. Sir Edward Codrington and his daughter, who are old friends of mine, were there, and met me with great cordiality; and though the evening was not very brilliant, I enjoyed myself very much.

Kinglake, the author of "Eothen," paid me a long visit to-day, and was very agreeable. . . .

Mrs. Procter asked me to-day to take their family dinner with them, because she knew I should else dine all alone. Mr. Procter was not at home, so that we had a *tête-à-tête* gossip about everybody. . . .

I know very well that nobody likes to be bored, but I think it would be better to be bored to extinction than to mortify and pain people by rejecting their society because they are not intensely amusing or distinguished, or even because they are intensely tiresome and commonplace. . . .

Good night, dear. My eyes smart and ache; I must go to bed. I have seen to-day some verses written by an American friend of mine on my departure. I think they are good, but cannot be quite sure, as they are about myself. I will send them to you, if you care to see them.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Mortimer Street, November 30th, 1845.

I wrote to you until 12.30 last night, and it is now 12.30 this morning, and it must be very obvious to you that, not being Dorothy, I can have nothing under

the heavens to say to you. Let me see for the *events* of these hours. After I went to bed I read, according to a practice which I have steadily followed for the past year, in the hope of substituting some other *last thoughts* and visions for those which have haunted me, waking or sleeping, during that time. So last night, having, alas! long ago finished Arnold, and despatched two historical plays, long enough, but nothing else, to have been written by Schiller, which my brother gave me, I betook myself to certain agricultural reports, written by a Mr. Coleman, an American, who came over here to collect information upon these subjects for an agricultural society. These reports he gave me the other day, and you know I read implicitly whatever is put into my hands, holding every species of book worth reading for something. So I read about fencing, enclosing, draining, ditching, and ploughing, till I fell asleep, fancying myself Ceres.

This morning, after some debate with myself about staying away from church, I deliberately came to the conclusion that I would do so, because I had a bad headache. (Doesn't that sound like a child, who doesn't want to go to church, and says it has got a stomach-ache? It's true, nevertheless.) But—and because I have such a number of letters to write to America, that I thought I would say my prayers at home, and then do that.

And now, before beginning my American budget, I have written one to Lady Dacre, one to Emily, one to my brother, and this one to you; and shall now start off to the other side of the Atlantic, by an epistle to J—— C——, the son of the afore-mentioned agri-

culturist, a friend of mine, who when I last left America, held me by the arm till the bell rang for the friends of those departing by the steamer to abandon them and regain the shore, and whose verses about me, which I mentioned to you in my last night's letter, please me more than his father's account of top-dressing, subsoiling, and all the details of agriculture, which, however, I believe is the main fundamental interest of civilization.

Before this, however, I must go and take a walk, because the sun shines beautifully, and

"I must breathe some vital air,
If any's to be found in Cavendish Square."

I'm sorry to say we are going to leave this comfortable lodging, and our courteous landlord, whose civilities to me are most touching. I do not know what my father intends doing, but he talked of taking a house at *Brompton*. What a distance from everything, for him and for me!

I have just had a kind note from the M——s, again earnestly bidding me down to Hampshire; another affectionate invitation from Lord and Lady Dacre to the Hoo, and a warm and sympathizing letter from Amelia Twiss, for whom, as you know, I entertain even a greater regard and esteem than for her sisters. . . .

My dear Hal, when my father told me that he was going to Brighton for three weeks, it seemed quite impossible that we should sail for America on December 4th. Now that that question is settled, at any rate temporarily, I feel restored to something like calm, and think I shall probably go and see the M——s, and

perhaps run down to Hastings to visit—Dorothy Wilson, of course.

God bless you, dear. Does Dorothy write better about nothing than I do?

Ever yours,
FANNY.

The Hoo, Welwyn, Herts, December, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

. . . God knows I am admonished to patience, both by my own helplessness, and the inefficiency of those who, it seems to me, ought to be able to help me. . . .

Doubtless, my father reasonably regrets the independence which I might by this time have earned for myself, in my profession, and feels anxious about my unprovided future. I have written to Chorley, the only person I know, to whom I can apply on the subject, to get me some means of publishing the few manuscript verses I have left in some magazine or other. . . . If I cannot succeed in this, I shall try if I can publish my "English Tragedy," and make a few pounds by it. It is a wretchedly uncomfortable position, but compared with all that has gone before, it is *only* uncomfortable.

I came down here yesterday, and found, though the night was rainy and extremely cold, dear Lord Dacre and B—— standing out on the door-step to receive me. She has grown tall, and stout, and very handsome. . . . Is it not wonderful that the spirit of life should be potent enough ever to make us forget the death perpetually hovering over, and ready to pounce upon us? and yet how little dread, habitually, disturbs us, either

for ourselves or others, lying all the time, as we do, within the very grasp of doom! Lord Dacre is looking well; my friend, Lady Dacre, is grown more deaf, and much broken. Poor thing! she has had a severe trial, in the premature loss of those dearest to her. . . .

God bless you, dear Hal. Good-bye. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

The Hoo, Welwyn, December 6th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I have been spending the greater part of the morning in sitting for my likeness to a young girl here, a Miss E——, daughter of some old friends of the Dacres, whose talent for drawing and especially for taking likenesses, is uncommon.

That which Lawrence pronounced the most difficult task he ever undertook, could hardly prove an easy one to a young lady artist, who has, however, succeeded in giving a very sufficient likeness of one of my faces; and I think it so pretty, that I am charmed with it, as indeed I always have been with every likeness almost that has ever been taken of me, but the only true ones—the daguerreotypes. However, even daguerreotypes are not absolutely accurate; the process is imperfect, except for plane (not *plain*, you know) surfaces. Besides, after all, it takes a human hand to copy a human face, because of the human soul in both; and the great sun in heaven wants fire, light, and power, to reproduce that spark of divinity in us, before which his material glory grows pale.

As long as he was Phœbus Apollo, and went about, man-fashion, among the girls, making love to such of them as he fancied, he may have been something of an artist, his conduct might be called artistic, I should say ; but now that he sits in the sky, staring with his one eye at womankind in general, Sir Joshua, and even Sir Thomas, are worth a score of him.

While I was sitting, Mrs. E——, my young artist's mother, read aloud to us the new volume of Lord Chesterfield's writings.

My impression of Lord Chesterfield is a very ignorant one, principally derived from the very little I remember of that profound science of superficiality contained in his "Letters to his Son." The matter I heard to-day exalted him infinitely in my esteem, and charmed me extremely, both by the point and finish of the style (what fine workmanship good prose is !), and the much higher moral tone than anything I remembered, and consequently expected from him.

Mrs. E—— read us a series of his "Sketches of his Political Cotemporaries," quite admirable for the precision, distinctness, and apparent impartiality with which they were drawn, and for their happiness of expression and purity of diction. Among them is a character of Lord Scarborough, which, if it be a faithful portrait, is perhaps the highest testimony in itself to the merit of one who called such a man his intimate friend ; and going upon the faith of the old proverbs, "Show me your company, and I'll tell you what you are," "Like will to like," "Birds of a feather flock together," and all the others that, unlike Sancho Panza, I do not give you, has amazingly advanced Lord Chesterfield in my esteem.

We have this morning parted with some of the company that was here. Mr. and Mrs. Hibbard, clever and agreeable people, have gone away, and, to my great regret, carried with them my dear B——, for whom my affection and esteem are as great as ever. Mrs. Hibbard is the daughter of Sydney Smith, and so like him that I kept wondering when she would begin to abuse the bishops. . . .

Dearest Hal, I took no exercise yesterday, but a drive in an open carriage with Lady Dacre. The Americans call the torture of being thumped over their roads in their vehicles *exercise*, and so, no doubt, was Sancho's tossing in the blanket; but voluntary motion being the only effectual motion for any good purpose of health (or holiness, I take it), I must be off, and tramp while the daylight lasts.

What a delightful thing good writing is! What a delightful thing good talking is! How much delight there is in the exercise and perfection of our faculties! How *full* a thing, and admirable, and wonderful is this nature of ours! So Hamlet indeed observes—but he was mad. Good-bye. Give my love to dear Dorothy, and

Believe me, ever yours,

FANNY.

The Hoo, Welwyn, December 7th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Just before I came down here, Rogers paid me a long visit, and talked a great deal about Lady Holland; and I felt interested in what he said about the woman who had been the centre of so remarkable


a society and his intimate friend for so many years. Having all her life appeared to suffer the most unusual terror, not of death only, but of any accident that could possibly, or impossibly, befall her, he said that she had died with perfect composure, and, though consciously within the very shadow of death for three whole days before she crossed the dark threshold, she expressed neither fear nor anxiety, and exhibited a tranquillity of mind by no means general at that time, and which surprised many of the persons of her acquaintance. If, however, it be true, as some persons intimate with her have told me, that her terrors were not genuine, but a mere expression of her morbid love of power, insisting at all costs and by all means upon occupying everybody about her with herself, then it is not so strange that she should at last have ceased to demand the homage and attention of others as she so closely approached the time when even their most careless recollection would cease to be at her command.

Rogers said that she spoke of her life with considerable satisfaction, asserting that she had done as much good and as little harm as she could during her existence. The only person about whom she expressed any tenderness was her daughter, Lady —, with whom, however, she had not been always upon the best terms; and who, being *ultra-serious* (as it is comically called), had not unnaturally an occasional want of sympathy with her very unserious mother. Lady Holland, however, desired much to see her, and she crossed the Channel, having travelled in great haste, and arrived just in time to fulfil her mother's wish and receive her blessing.

Her will creates great astonishment—created, I should say; for she is twice buried already, under the Corn Law question. She left her son only £2000, and to Lord John Russell £1500 a year, which at his death reverts to Lady L——’s children. To Rogers, strange to say, nothing; but he professed to think it an honour to be left out. To my brother, strange to say, something (Lord Holland’s copy of the “British Essayists,” in thirty odd volumes); and to Lady Palmerston her collection of fans, which, though it was a very valuable and curious one, seems to me a little like making fun of that superfine fine lady. ¶

I have just come back from church, dear Hal, where the Psalms for the day made me sick. Is it not horrible that we should make Christian prayers of Jewish imprecations? How can one utter, without shuddering, such sentences as “Let them be confounded, and put to shame, that seek after my soul. Let them be as the dust before the wind: and the angel of the Lord scattering them. Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them”? Is it not dreadful to think that one must say, as I did, “God forbid!” while my eyes rested on the terrible words contained in the appointed *worship* of the day; or utter, in God’s holy house, that to which one attaches no signification; or, worst of all, connect in any way such sentiments with one’s own feelings, and repeat, with lips that confess Christ, curses for which His blessed command has substituted blessings?

We were speaking on this very subject at Milman’s the other evening and when I asked Mrs. Milman if



she joined in the repetition of such passages, she answered with much simplicity, like a good woman and a faithful clergywoman, "Oh yes! but then, you know, one never means what one says,"—which, in spite of our company consisting chiefly of "witty Churchmen," elicited from it a universal burst of laughter. I have not space or time to enlarge more upon this, and you may be thankful for it. . . .

I will just give you two short extracts from conversations I have had here, and leave you to judge how I was affected by them. . . .

I am sometimes thankful that I do not live in my own country, for I am afraid I should very hardly escape the Pharisee's condemnation for thinking myself better than my neighbours; and yet, God knows, not only that I am, but that I do, not. But how come people's notions so inside out and so upside down?

Good-bye, my dear. I am enjoying the country every hour of the day. Give my love to dear Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Mortimer Street, Monday, December 8th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Your delightful little inkstand is the very pest of my life; it keeps tumbling over backwards every minute, and pouring the ink all over, and making me swear (which is really a pity), and is, in short, invaluable; and I am so much more obliged to you than I was even at first for it, now that I know, I hope, all its inestimable qualities, that I think it right to mention the increased gratitude I feel for the

hateful little bottle. There it goes again! Oh, thank you, my love! Just let me pick it up, and wipe the mess it has made.

I left the Hoo this morning, and have just been a couple of hours in Mortimer Street. I find my father going to dine at Judge Talfourd's, and, I am happy to say, free from the pain in his side which had alarmed me, and which I now suppose, as he did at the time, to have proceeded only from cold. He looks well, and is in good spirits.

I find a note here from Miss Berry, inviting me to dinner *to-day*, which has been waiting for me ever since Friday. Of course I could not go, and felt distressed that the old lady's kind bidding should have remained so long unanswered. Just as I was despatching my excuse, however, in rushed Agnes (Gooseberry, you know, as Sydney Smith used to call her), all screams and interjections, to know why I hadn't answered her note, which was very annoying. However, in nursery language, I *peacified* the good old lady to the best of my ability. I am sorry to lose their pleasant party, but have an excessive dislike to hurrying immediately from one thing to another in this way, and therefore must really spend this evening of my arrival in peace and quiet.

Mrs. — called to-day. I am sorry to say that she provokes me now, instead of only annoying me, as she used to do. It's really quite dreadful! She talks such odd bits of sentimental morality, that somehow or other don't match with each other, or with anything else in creation, that it disgusts me, and I am so disagreeable and so conscious of it, and she is so conscious

that I am conscious of it, that, poor things! it is quite piteous for both of us.

You ask me the name of the political economist I met at Burnham. William Nassau Senior, a very clever man, a great talker, good upon all subjects, but best upon all those on which I am even below my average depth of ignorance, public affairs, questions of government, the science of political economy, and all its kindred knowledges. The rest of our party were only Rogers and myself, our host and hostess (Mr. and Mrs. Grote), and a brother of the latter, who has been living many years in Sweden, has a charming countenance, a delightful voice, sings Swedish ballads exquisitely, worships Jenny Lind, and knows Frederica Bremer intimately. He added an element of gentleness and softness to the material furnished by our cast-iron "man of facts" and our acrid poet, that was very agreeable. In speaking of Arnold, I was ineffably amused at hearing Mrs. Grote characterize him as a "*very weak man*," which struck me as very funny. *The Esprit Forte*, however, I take it, merely referred to his belief in the immortality of the soul, the existence of a God, and a few other similar "superstitions." They seemed all to agree that he was likely to "turn out" *only* such men as Lord Sandon and Lord Ashley. [The training of Arnold, acting upon a noble mind inherited from a noble-minded mother, produced the illustrious man whom all Protestant Christendom has lately joined to mourn, Dean Stanley, of whom, however, no mention was made in the above discussion.] You, who know the political bias of these men, will be better able to judge than I am, how far this was a

compliment to Arnold's intellect; to his moral influence, I suppose, the character of "only such" pupils would bear high testimony.

My father reads to-morrow at Highgate, and I believe, twice again there in the course of next week. Beyond that, I think he has no immediate plans for reading, and indeed his plans seem altogether to me in the most undecided state.

I found letters here from my sister and E——, both of them urging me to join them in Rome; these I read to my father, and I am thankful to say that he seemed to entertain the idea of my doing so, and even hinted at the possibility of his accompanying me thither, inasmuch as he felt rather fatigued with his reading, would be glad to recruit a little, would wish to protect me on my journey to Italy, and, finally, never having been in Rome, would like to see it, etc. He said, after we got there he could either leave me with my sister or stay himself till the spring, when we might all come back together.

You may imagine how enchanted I was at the bare suggestion of such a plan. I told him nothing he could do would give me so much happiness, and that as I had come back upon his hands in the state of dependence in which I formerly belonged to him, it was for him to determine in what manner the burden would be least grievous to him, least costly, and least inconvenient; that if he thought it best I should go to my sister, I should be thankful to do so; but that if he would come with me, I should be enchanted.

I think, dearest Hal, that this unhopèd-for prospect will yet be realized for me. I am very fortunate in

the midst of my misfortune, and have infinite cause to be grateful for the hope of such an opportunity of distracting my thoughts from it. Even to go alone would be far preferable for me to remaining here, but I should have to leave my father alone behind, and do most earnestly wish he may determine to come with me.

Our landlord and he cannot agree about terms, and I suspect that he would not remain in the lodgings under any circumstances, on that account. Oh! I hope we shall go together to Italy. "Dahin! Dahin!" . . .

How I do wish you were sitting on this little striped sofa by me! No offence in the world to you, my dear Dorothy (or the Virgin Martyr), because I wish you were here too—in the first place that Hal might not be too dissatisfied with my society; in the next place that I might enjoy yours; and in the third place that you might benefit by both of ours.

I remain, dearly beloved females, both of yours affectionately,

FANNY.

There goes your ink-pot head over heels backward again! Oh, it has recovered itself! Hateful little creature, what a turn it has given me—as the housemaids say—without even succeeding in overturning itself, which it tried to do! It is idiotic as well as malicious!

Mortimer Street, Tuesday.

DEAREST HAL,

I did not hear a great deal more than I told you about Bunsen at Burnham. They all seemed to think him so *overcordial* in his manner as not to be sincere—or at any rate to produce the effect of insincerity. Senior said that one of his sons was for a time private tutor in a family, while Bunsen himself was one of the King of Prussia's ministers. I could not very well perceive myself the moral turpitude of this, but the answer was that it was *infra dig.*, and of course that is quite turpitude enough. At the Hoo I asked Lord Dacre if he knew Bunsen, but he did not. I should have attached some value to his opinion of him, because he has no vulgar notions of the above sort, and also because, having lived at one time in Germany among Germans, he has more means of estimating justly a mind and nature essentially German like Bunsen's than most Englishmen, who—the very cleverest among them—understood *nothing* that is not themselves, *i.e.* English, in intellect or character.

Mrs. E—— told me that she had heard from some of the great Oxford dons that the impression produced among them by the first pupil of Arnold's who came among them was quite extraordinary—not at all from superior intelligence or acquirement, but from his being absolutely a *new creature* (think of the Scripture use of that term, Hal, and think how this circumstance illustrates it)—a new *kind* of man; and that so they found all his pupils to differ from any young men that had come up to their colleges before.

When I deplored the cessation of this noble and powerful influence by Arnold's death, she said—what indeed I knew—that his spirit survived him and would work mightily still. And so of course it will continue to work, for to the increase of the seed sown by such a one there is no limit. She told me that one of his pupils—by no means an uncommon but rather dull and commonplace young man—had said in speaking of him, “I was dreadfully afraid of Arnold, but there was not the thing he could have told me to do that I should not instantly and confidently have set about.” What a man! I do wonder if I shall see him in heaven—as it is called—if ever I get there.

Mrs. E—— told me that Lady Francis [Egerton] knew him, and did not like him altogether; but then he, it seems, was habitually reserved, and she neither soft nor warm certainly in her outward demeanour, so perhaps they *really* never met at all. . . . Mrs. E—— said Lady Francis had not considered her correspondence with Arnold satisfactory. I suspect it was upon theological questions of doctrine (or doctrinal questions of theology); and that Lady Francis had complained that his letters did not come sufficiently to the point. What can her point have been? . . .

As for what you say about deathbed utterances—it seems to me the height of folly to attach the importance to them that is often given to them. The physical conditions are at that time such as often amply to account for what are received as spiritual ecstasies or agonies. I imagine whatever the *laity* may do, few physicians are inclined to consider their

patients' utterances *in articulo mortis* as satisfactorily significant of anything but their bodily state. Certainly by what you tell me of — his moral perceptions do not appear to have received any accession of light whatever from the near dawning of that second life which seems sometimes to throw such awful brightness as the dying are about to enter it far over the past that they are leaving behind.

My dinner at Mrs. Procter's was very pleasant. In the first place I love her husband very much; then there were Kenyon, Chorley, Henry Reeve, Monckton Milnes, and Browning! — a goodly company, you'll allow. Oh, how I wish wits were catching! but if they were I don't suppose after that dinner I should be able to put up with poor pitiful *prose people* like you for a long time to come.

With regard to the London standard of morality, dear Hal, I do not think it lower, but probably a little higher upon the whole than that of the society of other great capitals: the reasons why this highly civilized atmosphere must be also so highly mephitic are obvious enough, and therefore as no alteration is probable, or perhaps possible in that respect, I am not altogether sorry to think that I shall live in a denser intellectual, but clearer moral atmosphere in my "other world." I do not believe that the brains shrink much when the soul is well nourished, or that the intellect starves and dwindles upon what feeds and expands the spirit.

My little sketch of Lenox Lake lies always open before me, and I look at it very often with yearning eyes . . . for the splendid rosy sunsets over the dark blue mountain-tops, and for the clear and lovely ex-

panse of pure waters reflecting both, above all for the wild white-footed streams that come leaping down the steep stairways of the hills. I believe I do like places better than people: these only look like angels *sometimes*, but the earth in such spots looks like heaven always—especially the mountain-tops so near the sky, so near the stars, so near the sun, with the clouds below them, and the humanity of the world and its mud far below them again—all but the spirit of adoration which one has carried up thither one's self. I do not wonder the heathen of whom the Hebrew Scriptures complain offered sacrifices on every high hill: they seem—they are—altars built by God for His especial worship. Good-bye, my dearest Hal.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

[After I had the pleasure and honour of making Baron Bunsen's acquaintance, I was one day talking with him about Arnold, and the immense loss I considered his death to England, when he answered, almost in Mrs. E——'s words, but still more emphatically, that he would work better even dead than alive, that there was in him a powerful element of antagonism which roused antagonism in others: his individuality, he said, stood sometimes in the way of his purpose, he darkened his own light, "he will be more powerful now that he is gone, than even while he was here."

In Charles Greville's "Memoirs," he speaks of going down to Oatlands to consult his sister and her husband (Lord and Lady Francis Egerton) upon the expediency of Arnold's being made a bishop by the

prime minister of the day—I think his friend, Lord Melbourne—and says that they gave their decided opinion against it. I wonder if the correspondence which Lady Francis characterized as “unsatisfactory” was her ground of objection against Arnold. It is a curious thing to me to imagine his calling to the highest ecclesiastical office to have depended in any measure upon her opinion.

I forget what Arnold’s politics were; of course, some shade of Whig or Liberal, if he was to be a bishop of Lord Melbourne’s. The Ellesmeres were Tories: she a natural Conservative, and somewhat narrow-minded, though excellently conscientious; but if she prevented Arnold being named to the Queen, she certainly exercised an influence for which I do not think she was quite qualified. I think it not improbable that Arnold’s orthodoxy may not have satisfied her, and beyond that question she would not go.]

Wednesday, December 10th, 1845.

Here, dearest Hal, are J—— C——’s verses; I think they have merit, though being myself the subject of them may militate against my being altogether a fair judge. He stood by me when last I sailed from America, until warned, with the rest of my friends, to forsake me and return to the shore. . . .

All poets have a feminine element (good or bad) in them, but a feminine man is a species of being less fit, I think, than even an average woman, to do battle with adverse circumstance and unfavourable situation. . . .

You ask me about my interviews with Mrs. Jameson. She has called twice here, but did not on either occasion speak of her difference with my sister. To-day, however, I went to Ealing to see her, and she then spoke about it; not, however, with any feeling or much detail: indeed, she did not refer at all to the cause of rupture between them, but merely stated, with general expressions of regret, that they were no longer upon cordial terms with each other. . . .

Mrs. Jameson told me a story to-day which has put the climax to a horrid state of nervous depression brought on by a conversation with my father this morning, during which every limb of my body twitched as if I had St. Vitus's dance. The scene of the story was Tetschen, the Castle of the Counts Thun, of which strange and romantic residence George Sand has given a detailed description in her novel of "Consuelo." . . .

As for the Moloch-worships of this world, of course those who practise them have their reward; they pass their children through the fire, and I suppose that thousands have agonized in so sacrificing their children. Is it not wonderful that Christ came eighteen hundred years ago into the world, and that these pitiless, mad devil-worships are not yet swept out of it? . . .

I cannot tell you anything about myself, and, indeed, I can hardly think of myself. . . .

My father has determined not to accompany me to Italy, so I shall go alone. . . .

God bless you.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Friday, 12th, 1845.

Your ink-bottle, my dear, has undergone an improvement, if indeed anything so excellent could admit of bettering. The little round glutinous stopper—india-rubber, I believe—from the peculiar inconvenience of which I presume the odious little thing derives its title as patent, has come unfastened from the top, and now, every time I open and shut it, I am compelled to ink my fingers all over, in order to extract this admirable stopper from the mouth of the bottle, or crane it back into its patent position in the lid, where it won't stay. 'Tis quite an invaluable invention for the practise of patience.

I have nothing whatever to tell you. Two days ago, my father informed me he had determined to send me alone to Italy. Since then, I have not heard a word more from him upon the subject. He read at Highgate yesterday evening for the second time this week, but as he had dinner engagements each time at the houses of people I did not know, I did not accompany him. I think he reads to-morrow at Islington, and if so, I shall ask him to let me go with him. He reads again on Thursday next, at Highgate. . . .

I believe my eyes are growing larger as I grow older, and I don't wonder at it, I stare so very wide so very often. Mrs. — talks sentimental morality about everything, her notions are *pretty near* right, which is the same thing as pretty near wrong (for "a miss," you know, "is as good as a mile"). She is near right enough to amaze me how she contrives to be so much nearer wrong; she is like a person trying to remember a tune, and singing it not quite correctly,

while you know it better, and can't sing it at all, and are ready to go mad with mistakes which you perceive, without being able to rectify them: that is a musical experience of which you, not being musical, don't know the torture. . . .

Did I tell you that Mrs. Jameson showed me the other day a charming likeness of my sister which she had made—like that pretty thing she did of me—with all the dresses of her parts? If I could have done a great littleness, I could have gone down on my knees and begged for it; I wished for it so much.

She spoke to me in great tribulation about a memoir of Mrs. Harry Siddons which it seems she was to have undertaken, but which Harry Siddons (her son) and William Grant (her son-in-law) do not wish written. Mrs. Jameson seems to feel some special annoyance upon this subject, and says that Mrs. Harry was herself anxious to have such a record made of her; and this surprises me so much, knowing Mrs. Harry as I thought I did, that I find it difficult to believe it. . . .

Do you remember, after our reading together Balzac's "*Récherche de l'Absolu*," your objecting to the character of Madame de Cläes, and very justly, a certain meretricious taint which Balzac seldom escapes in his heroines, and which in some degree impaired the impression that character, in many respects beautifully conceived and drawn, would have produced? Well, there is a vein of something similar in Mrs. —'s mind, and to me it taints more or less everything it touches. She showed me the other day an etching of Eve, from one of Raphael's compositions.

The figure, of course, was naked, and being of the full, round, voluptuous, Italian order, I did not admire it,—the antique Diana, drawing an arrow from her quiver, her short drapery blown back from her straight limbs by her rapid motion, being my ideal of beauty in a womanly shape. “Ah, but,” said Mrs. —, “look at the inimitable *coquetry* of her whole air and posture: how completely she seems to know, as she looks at the man, that he can’t resist her!” (It strikes me that that whole sentence ought to be in French.) Now, this is not at all my notion of Eve; even when she damned Adam and all the generations of men, I think she was more innocent than this. I imagine her like an eager, inquisitive, greedy child, with the fruit, whatever it was, part in her hand, and part between her teeth, holding up her hand, or perhaps her mouth, to Adam. You see my idea of Eve is a sensual, self-willed, ignorant savage, who saw something beautiful, that smelt good, and looked as if it tasted good, and so tasted it, without any aspiration after any other knowledge. This real innate fleshly devil of greediness and indiscretion would, however, not bear the heavy theological superstruction that has been raised upon it, and therefore a desire for forbidden knowledge is made to account for the woman’s sin and the sorrows of all her female progeny. To me, this merely sensual sin, the sin of a child, seems much more picturesque, a good deal fitter for the purposes of art, without the mystic and mythical addition of an intellectual desire for knowledge and the agency of the Satanic serpent. Alas! the mere flesh is devil enough, and serves for all the consequences.

Blackwood will publish my verses, and, I believe, pay me well for them ; indeed, I shall consider any payment at all good enough for such trumpery.

Good-bye, dear.

I am, ever yours,
FANNY.

My dearest Dorothea, or the Virgin Martyr, I make a courtesy to you. [By this title of a play of Massinger's, I used frequently to address Miss Wilson, whose name was Dorothy.]

Saturday, December 13th, 1845.

Thank you, dear Hal, again, for those elastic circles. Now that I know how to use them, I am extremely charmed with them. In my sister's letter to me she gave me no further detail of her health than merely to state that she had injured herself seriously by sitting for hours on the cold stones of St. Peter's. . . .

You know, dear Harriet, that few women have ever had such an education as to enable them fully to appreciate the classical associations of Italy (by-the-by, do you remember that one brief and rather desponding notice of female education in "Arnold's Letters" ?) ; and as for me, I am as ignorant as dirt, so that all that full and delightful spring of pleasure which a fine classical knowledge opens to the traveller in the heroic lands is utterly sealed to me. I have not even put my lips to the brink of it. I have always thought that no form of human enjoyment could exceed that of a thorough scholar, such a one as Arnold, for instance, visiting Rome for the first time.

It is not, however, from recollection, association, or reflection, that I look to deriving pleasure in Italy, but from my vivid perceptive faculties, from my senses (my nose, perhaps, excepted), and in the mere beauty that remains from the past, and abides in the present, in those Southern lands. You know what a vividly perceptive nature mine is; and, indeed, so great is my enjoyment from things merely material that the idea of ever being parted from this dear body of mine, through which I perceive them and see, hear, smell, touch, and taste so much exquisite pleasure, makes me feel rather uncomfortable. My spirit seems to me the decidedly inferior part of me, and, compared with my body, which is, at any rate, a good machine of its sort, almost a little contemptible, decidedly not good of its sort. I sometimes feel inclined to doubt which is the immortal; for I have hitherto suffered infinitely more from a defective spirit than from what St. Paul calls "this body of corruption."

My dear Harriet, if I get a chance to get into the waterfall at Tivoli, you may depend upon it I will; because just at such times I have a perfectly immortal faith in my mortality. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Monday, December 15th, 1845.

DEAREST HAL,

Thank you for your nice inkstand, but I do not like your sending it to me, nevertheless; because I am sure it is a very great privation to you, being as you are, particular and fidgety in such matters;

and it is not a great gain to me, who do not care what I write out of, and surely I shall always be able, go where I will, among frogs or maccaronis, to procure *sucre noir*, or *inchiostro nero* to indite to you with. I shall send you back the poor dear little beloved pest you sent me first, because I am sure the stopper can be readjusted, and then it will be as *good* as ever, and you will have a peculiar inkstand to potter with, without which I do not believe you would be yourself.

Thank you for the extract from Arnold. I have no idea that Adam was "a mystical allegory," and you know that I believe every man to be his own devil, and a very sufficient one for all purposes of (so-called) damnation. . . .

I suppose the history of Genesis to be the form assumed by the earliest traditions in which men's minds attempted to account for the creation and the first conditions of the human species. The laborious and perilous existence of man; the still more grievous liabilities of woman, who among all barbarous people is indeed the more miserable half of mankind: and it seems obvious that in those Eastern lands, where these traditions took their birth, the growth of venomous reptiles, the deadliest and most insidious of man's natural enemies, should suggest the idea of the type of all evil.

Moses (to whom the Genesis is, I believe, in spite of some later disputants, generally attributed), I presume, accepted the account as literally true, as probably did the authorities, Chaldean or other, from which he derived it. . . .

Moses' "inspiration" did not prevent his enacting

some illiberal and cruel laws, among many of admirable wisdom and goodness ; and I see no reason why it should have exempted him from a belief in the traditions of his age. . . .

I have heard that there has lately been found in America part of the fossil vertebræ of a serpent which must have measured, it is said, *a hundred and forty feet!* I cannot say I believe it, but if any human creatures inhabited the earth at the time when such "small gear" are supposed to have disported themselves on its surface, if the merest legend containing reference to such a "worm" survived to scare the early risers on this planet of ours, in its first morning hours of consolidation, who can wonder that such a creature should become the hideous representative of all evil, the origin of all sin and suffering, and the special being between which and the human race irreconcilable enmity was to exist for ever? for surely not even the most regenerate mind in Christendom could live on decent terms with the best-disposed snake of such a length as that.

I do not think Mrs. Jameson had positively *done* anything in the matter of Mrs. Harry Siddons's memoirs beyond looking over a good many papers, and *preparing her mind* with a view to it; and what you tell me a little shakes my confidence in my own opinion upon the subject, which, indeed, was by no means positively made up about it, because I know—at least, I think—there *were* elements in Mrs. Harry's mind not altogether incompatible perhaps with the desire of leaving some record of herself, or having such made for her by others. . . . There are few

people whom I pity more than Mrs. Jameson. I always thought she had a great deal of good in her, but the finer elements in her character have become more apparent and valuable to me the longer I have known her; her abilities are very considerable, and her information very various and extensive; she is a devoted, dutiful daughter, and a most affectionate and generous sister, working laboriously for her mother and the other members of her family. . . . I compassionate and admire her very much.

I dined on Friday last with dear Miss Cottin, who is a second edition of my dear Aunt Dall. Think of having known two such angels in one's life! On Saturday I dined *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Procter, who is extremely kind to me. . . . Yesterday I dined with my father at the Horace Wilsons'; to-day I dine with Chorley, and to-morrow at the George Siddonses'.

You cannot think how much my late experiences have shattered me and broken my nervous equanimity. . . . To-day my father came suddenly into the room while I was playing on the piano, and startled me so by merely speaking to me that I burst into tears, and could not stand for several minutes, I trembled so. I have been suffering for some time past from an almost constant pain in my heart. I have wretched nights, and sometimes pass the whole morning of these days when I dine out, sitting on the floor, crying. . . .

God bless you, dear.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

Mortimer Street, December, 1845.

No, my dearest Hal, it would be impossible for me to tell you how sad I am ; and instead of attempting to do so, my far better course is to try and write of something else.

My father still sits with maps and guide-books about him, debating of my route ; and though I told him the other day that I would be ready to start at any moment he appointed, and that we both agreed that, on account of the cold, I had better not delay my departure, he has neither determined my line of march, nor said a single word to me about my means of subsistence while I am abroad.

This morning he said that he had not yet entirely resolved not to accompany me ; that if he could conscientiously do it, he should like it of all things ; but that he did not feel warranted in neglecting any opportunity of making money. I think, perhaps, he is postponing his determination till some answer is received from America about V——'s tiny legacy to me. . . . But the very quickest answer to that letter cannot reach England before the middle of next month, and it seems a great pity to delay starting till the weather becomes so cold that we must inevitably suffer from it in travelling.

I feel no anxiety about the whole matter, or, indeed, any other. I am just as well here, and just as well there, and just as well everywhere as anywhere else. And though I should be glad to see all those much desired things, and most glad to embrace my sister again, and though I am occasionally annoyed and vexed here, I have many friends, and am very

well off in London; and elsewhere, of course, I shall find what will annoy and vex me. I am quite "content," a little after Shylock's fashion at the end of the judgment scene. At the core of some "content" what heart-despair may abound! . . .

I told you of my dining at Mrs. Procter's yesterday. She was quite alone. . . . She showed me a beautiful song written by my sister, words and music, a sort of lullaby, but the most woeful words! I think I must have inspired her with them, they threw me into such a state of nervous agitation. . . .

What a machine *I* am shut up in! Surely a desire to beget a temperance in all things had need be the law of *my* existence; and, but that I believe work left unfinished and imperfect in this life is finished in another, I should think the task almost too difficult of achievement to begin it here.

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours affectionately,

FANNY.

Wednesday, December 17th, 1845.

I found at last the little cross you have made over your house in the engraving of the St. Leonard's Esplanade, and when I had found it, wondered how I came to miss it; but the truth is, it was a blot, and the truth is, I took it for nothing more. . . .

You know I think, in spite of the French proverb, "*Toute vérité n'est pas bonne à dire*," that I think all truth *is* to be told; that is the teller's part: how it is received, or what effect it has, is the receiver's. . . . I think to suspect a person of wrong-doing more

painful than to know that they have done wrong. In the first place, uncertainty upon the character of those we love—the most vital thing in life to us, except our own character—is the worst of all uncertainties. Your trust is shaken, your faith destroyed; belief, that soul of love, is disturbed, and in addition to all this, as long as any element of uncertainty remains you have the alternate misery of suspecting yourself of unworthy, wicked, and base thoughts, of unjust surmises and uncharitable conclusions. When you know that those you love have sinned against you, your way is open and comparatively easy, for you have only to forgive them. I believe I am less sorry to find that A—— has wronged me by her actions, than I should have been to find that I had wronged her by my thoughts. . . . I would a great deal rather have to forgive her for her misconduct, and pity her for her misery, poor woman! than blame myself for the wickedness of unworthily suspecting her. I am really relieved to know that, at any rate, I have not done her injustice.

I have been about all day, getting my money and passport, and paying bills and last visits. I go on Saturday to Southampton, and cross to Havre. I do not know why Emily fancied I was to be at Bannisters to-night, but that last week, when my father suddenly asked me how soon I could start, I replied, "In twenty-four hours," and then wrote to Emily that possibly I might be at Southampton to-day. I go by diligence from Havre to Rouen, by railroad from Rouen to Paris, in the same *coupé* of the diligence which is put bodily—the diligence, I mean—upon the rails; thence to

Orleans by post-road, ditto; thence to Châlons-sur-Saône, ditto, down the Saône to Lyons, down the Rhone to Marseilles; steam thence to Civita Vecchia, and then vetturino to Rome. This is the route my father has made out for me; and, all things considered, I think it is the best, and presents few difficulties or inconveniences but those inevitable ones which must be encountered in travelling anywhere at this season of the year.

I shall not see you before I go, my dearest Hal, but I shall be with you before the Atlantic separates us once again; I know not how or where, but look forward to some season of personal intercourse with you before I return once more to America. The future, to be sure, lies misty enough before me, but I have always a feeling of nearness to you which even the Alps rising between us will not destroy, and I do not doubt to see you again before many months are passed. I am going this evening to the Miss Berrys'; they have asked me repeatedly to dine with them, and I have not had a single disengaged day, and as they have taken the trouble of coming to see after me bodily several times, I must pay my respects to them before I go, as in duty bound. . . .

I had a letter from T——; he had not yet received either of mine, and knew nothing of Philadelphia, or any of its inhabitants. He seems to think the Oregon question very black, and that the aspect of affairs on both sides of the water threatens war. . . .

My father now talks of reading in every direction as soon as I am gone—Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh; the latter place he told me he thought he should

go to in March; and then again, every now and then, he says, as soon as he can settle his affairs he shall come after me, as he should like to be in Rome at Easter to get the Pope's blessing. God bless you with a better blessing, my dearest Hal!

Ever yours,

FANNY.

... Charles Greville has given me a book of his to read: it is very well written and interests me a good deal; it is upon the policy of England towards Ireland. He so habitually in conversation deals in the merest gossip, and what appears to me to be the most worldly, and therefore superficial, view of things, that I am agreeably surprised by the ability displayed in his book; for though it is not in any way extraordinary, it is in every way beyond what I expected from him.

[The direct railroad routes through France are now followed by all travellers to Italy, and the picturesque coach-road which I took from Orleans to Autun at this time, when they did not exist, is little likely to draw wayfarers aside from them; nor was the season of the year when I made that journey at all a favourable one in which to visit the forest and mountain region of the Nivernais. I was snowed up at a miserable little village among the hills called Château Chinon; the diligences were unable for several days to come up thither, the roads being impassable, and I had to make my way through the picturesque wild region in a miserable species of dilapidated cabriolet, furnished me at an exorbitant price from Château Chinon to Autun, where I was again picked up by the diligence.]

Thursday, December 18th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I leave London the day after to-morrow for Southampton. I am full of calls, bills, visits, sorrow, perplexity, and nervous agitation, which all this hurry and bustle increase tenfold; letters to write, too, for the American post is in, and has brought me four from the other side of the water to deal with. In the middle of all this, Mrs. Jameson sends me long letters of Sarah Grant's and Mary Patterson's to read, which prove most distinctly to my mind that she, Mrs. Jameson, wishes to write a memoir of Mrs. Harry Siddons; but do not at all prove so distinctly to my mind that Mrs. Harry Siddons wished a memoir of herself to be written by Mrs. Jameson. So all this I have had to wade through, and shall have to answer, wondering all the while what under the sun it matters what I think about the whole concern, or why people care one straw what people's opinions are about them, or what they do.

My opinion about memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, lives, letters, and books in general indeed, Mrs. Jameson is perfectly familiar with; and therefore her making me go through this voluminous correspondence just now, when she knows how pressed I am for time, seems to me a little unmerciful; but, however, I've done it, that's one comfort.

Then comes dear George Coombe, with a long letter, the second this week, upon the subject of Miss C——'s private character, family connections, birth, parentage, reputation, etc., desiring me to answer all manner of questions about her; and I know no more

of her than I do of the man in the moon : and all this must likewise be attended to. . . .

About my consulting Wilson (our attached friend and family physician), I did so when I was here before, and I am following the advice he then gave me ; but for these physical effects of mental causes, what can be done as long as the causes continue ? . . .

Hayes (my maid) and I are to take the *coupé* of the diligence wherever we can get it on our route, and so proceed together and alone. I shall pay for the third place, but it is worth while to pay something to be protected from the proximity of some travelling Frenchmen ; and paying for this extra place is not a very great extravagance, as the cost of travelling by public conveyance on the Continent is very moderate.

I do not know when Blackwood intends publishing my things. I gave them into Chorley's hands, and Chorley's discretion, and know nothing further about them, but that I believe I shall be paid for them what he calls "tolerably well," and therefore what I shall consider magnificently well, inasmuch as they seem to me worth nothing at all.

I hear of nothing but the change of Ministry, but have been so much engrossed with my own affairs that I have not given much attention to what I have heard upon the subject. I believe Sir Robert Peel will come into some coalition with the Whigs, Lord John Russell, Lord Howick, etc., and this is perhaps the best thing that can happen, because, by all accounts, the Whigs have literally not got a man to head them. But I do not think anything is yet decided upon.

And now, my dear, I must break off, and write to

M—— M——, and George Coombe, about Miss C——'s virtue (why the deuce doesn't he look for it in her skull?), and Mrs. Jameson, and all America.

I breakfasted this morning with Rogers, and dine this evening at the Procters'. What an enviable woman I might appear!—only you know better.

Yours truly,

FANNY.

*Mortimer Street, Friday Night (i.e. Saturday Morning,
at 2 o'clock), December 19th, 1845.*

No! my dearest Hal, I do not think that to one who believes that life is spiritual education, it needs any very painful or difficult investigation of circumstances to perceive, not why such and such special trials are sent to certain individuals, but that all trial is the positive result of or has been incurred by error or sin; and beholding the beautiful face of bitterest adversity, for such is one of its aspects, that all trial is sent to teach us better things than we knew, or than we did, before. There is nothing for which God's mercy appears to me more praiseworthy than the essential essence of improvement, of progress, of growth, which *can* be expressed from the gall-apple of our sorrows. To each soul of man the needful task is set, the needful discipline administered, and therefore it doesn't seem to me to require much investigation into mere circumstances to accept my own trials. They are appointed to me because they are best for me, and whatever my apparent impatience under them, this is, in deed and truth, my abiding faith. . . .

But it is past two o'clock in the morning. I am

almost exhausted with packing and writing. Seven letters lie on my table ready to be sealed, seven more went to the post office this afternoon ; but though I will not sleep till I bid you good night, I will not write any more than just that now. My fire is out, my room cold, and, being tired with packing, I am getting quite chilled. You must direct to me to the care of Edward Sartoris, Esq., Trinità dei Monti, Rome, and I will answer you, as you know. I will write to you to-morrow, that is, to-day, when I get to Bannisters ; or perhaps before I start, if I can get up early enough to get half an hour before breakfast.

Good night. God bless you. I am unutterably sad, and feel as though I were going away from everybody, I know not whither—it is all vague, uncertain, indefinite, all but the sorrow which is inseparable from me, go where I will, a companion I can reckon upon for the rest of my life everywhere. As for the rest, if we did but recollect it, our next minute is always the unknown.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Bannisters, Saturday, December 20th, 1845.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

My last words and thoughts were yours last night ; but this morning, when I hoped to have written to you again, I found it impossible to do so ; so here I am in the room at Bannisters where you and I and Emily were sitting together a few weeks ago,—she on her knees, writing for a fly to take me to the steamer to-night, and I writing to you from this place, where it

seems as if you were still sitting beside us. Emily won't let me send you your little square ink-bottle for Queen's heads, but says she will keep it for you, so there I leave it in her hands.

Charles Greville's book (for it is not a pamphlet) is called "The Policy of England to Ireland," or something as nearly like that as possible. My praise of it may occasion you some disappointment, for *I* am pleased with it more because it is so much better than anything I expected from him, than because it is particularly powerful or striking in itself. The subject interests me a good deal, and the book is very agreeably and well written, and in a far better tone than I should have looked for in anything of his.

I have besought Mr. Lowndes to forward my letters to me without any delay, and I have no doubt he will do so. . . .

As for death, well is it with those who quietly reach the fifth act of their lives, with only the usual and inevitable decay and dropping off of all beloved things which time must bring ; the sudden catastrophe of adverse circumstance wrecking a whole existence in the very middle of its course, is a more terrible thing than death.

My dearest Hal, I have no more to say, but that "I love you." Emily is talking to me, and I feel as if I ought to talk to her. Give my dear love to dear Dorothy, and believe me,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Rome, Trinità dei Monti, Monday, April 20th, 1846.

You ask me what I shall do in the spring, my dear Hal. My present plan is to return to England next December, and remain with my father, if he can have me with him without inconvenience, till the weather is fine enough to admit of my returning without too much wretchedness to America. . . .

When E—— and my father wrote to me to return to England, I had no idea but that I was to have a home with the latter, that he expected and wished me to live with him. . . . I think now that if his deafness obliges him to give up his public readings, and cuts him off from his Club and the society that he likes, he will not be sorry that I should remain with him. . . .

By-the-by, I take your question about my plans for the spring to refer, not to this, but to next spring, as I suppose you know that I mean to remain with my sister during the coming summer, and that we are going to spend the greater part of it at Frascati, where E—— has taken a charming apartment in a lovely villa belonging to the Borghese.

You will be in England next winter, dear Hal, and I shall come then and stay with you and Dorothy. You have interfered so little with my journal-keeping by your letters, that I have been wondering and lamenting that I did not hear from you for the last some time, and was all but wrought up to the desperate pitch of writing to you *out of turn*, to know what was the matter, when I received your last letter. I do not, however, keep my journal with any sort of regularity ; my time is extremely and very irregularly occupied,

and I should certainly preserve no record whatever of my impressions but for the very disagreeable conviction that it is my duty to do so, if there is, as I believe there is, the slightest probability of my being able by this means to earn a little money and to avoid drawing upon my father's resources. I have a great contempt for this process, and a greater contempt for the barren balderdash I write: but exchange is no robbery, a thing is worth what it will fetch, and if a bookseller will buy my trash, I will sell it to him; for beggars must, in no case, be choosers. . . .

You say that I have yet told you nothing of my satisfaction in Rome. I wish you had not made your challenge so large. How shall I tell you of my satisfaction in Rome? and at which end of Rome, or my satisfaction, shall I begin? You must remember, in the first place, that its strangeness is not absolutely to me what it is to many English people; the brilliant and enchanting sky is not unlike that with which I have been familiar for some years past in America; the beautiful, and (to us Anglo-Saxon islanders) unusual vegetation, bear some resemblance to that of the Southern States in winter. Boston, you know, is in the same latitude as Rome, and though the American northern winter is incomparably more severe than that of Italy, the summer heat and the southern semi-tropical vegetation are kindred features in that other world and this. The difference of this winter climate and that of the United States has hitherto been an unfavourable one to me; for I have been extremely unwell ever since I have been here—the sirocco destroys me body and soul while it lasts, and there is a sultry

heaviness in the atmosphere that gave me at first perpetual headaches, and still continues to disagree extremely with me. Now, of these abatements of my satisfaction I have told you, but of my satisfaction itself I should find it impossible to tell, but I should think you might form some idea of it, knowing both me and the place where I am. . . .

I have hitherto been more anxious to remain with my sister than to go and see even the sights of Rome. Now, however, that our departure for Frascati must take place in about a month, I get up at seven every morning, and go out before breakfast alone, and in this way I am contriving to do some of my traveller's duty.

I walked this morning to the Pantheon, and heard Mass there. On my return home, I went into the Church of the Trinità dei Monti, to hear the French nuns sing their prayers. This afternoon we have been to the Villa Albani, which is ridiculously full of rose-bushes, which are so ridiculously full of roses, that, except in a scene in a pantomime, I never saw anything like it. We remained in the garden, and the day was like a warm English April day, in consequence of which we had the loveliest pageant of thick sullen rain and sudden brilliant flashes of sunlight chasing each other all over those exquisite Alban Hills, with our very *un-English* foreground of terraces, fountains, statues, vases, evergreen garden walls of laurel, myrtle, box, laurestinus, and ridiculous rose-bushes in ridiculous bloom. There never was a more enchanting combination of various beauty than the landscape we looked at and the place from which we looked at it. I brought

away some roses and lemon-blossoms: the latter I enclose in this letter, that some of the sweetness I have been enjoying may salute your senses also, and recall these divine scenes to your memory still more vividly. We came home from the Villa Albani in the most tremendous pour of rain, and had hardly taken off our bonnets when the whole sky, from the pines on Monte Maris to the Dome of Santa Maria Maggiore, was bathed all over in beauty and splendour indescribable. If we had only been Claude Lorraine, what a sunset we should have painted!

We have a charming little terrace garden to our house here, in which my "retired leisure" takes perpetual delight. . . .

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Frascati, Wednesday, May 20th, 1846.

MY DEAR HAL,

One would suppose that writing was to the full as disagreeable to you as it is to me, yet you do not profess that it is so, but merely write that you have little to say, as you think, that will interest me. Now, this is, I think, a general fallacy, but I am sure it is an individual one: the sight of your handwriting, representing as it does to me your face, your voice, and, above all, your generous and constant affection, makes the mere superscription of your letters worth a joyful welcome from me; and for any dearth of matter on your part, it lies, I rather think, chiefly in the direction which least affects me, *i.e.* society gossip, or "*news*,"

as it is called (O Lord! such *old* news as it is), being for ever the same stuff with a mere imperceptible difference in the pattern on it, let it come from what quarter of the civilized globe it will; and which, as far as I have had occasion to observe latterly, forms the chief resource of "polite letter-writers."

Of matters that do interest me, you might surely have plenty to say—your own health and frame of mind; the books you read, and what you think of them; and whatever of special interest to yourself occurs, either at home or abroad. At Ardgillan, you know, I know every inch of *your* ground, and between the little turret room and the Dell it seems to me many letters might be filled; then the state of politics in England interests me intensely; and the condition of Ireland is surely a most fruitful theme for comment just now. . . .

We are now at Frascati, and in spite of the inexhaustible, immortal interest of Rome, I am rejoicing with my whole nature, moral, mental, and physical, in our removal to the country. The beautiful aspect of this enchanting region, occasionally, by rare accident, recalls the hill country in America that I am so fond of; but this is of a far higher and nobler order of beauty.

The Campagna itself is an ever-present feature of picturesque grandeur in the landscape here, and gives it a character unlike anything anywhere else.

The district of country round Lenox rejoices in a number of small lakes (from one hill-side one sees five), of a few miles in circumference, which, lying in the laps of the hills, with fine wooded slopes sweeping

down to their bright basins, give a peculiar charm to the scenery ; while here, as you know, the volcanic waters of Albano and Nemi lie so deep in their rocky beds as to be invisible, unless from their very margins.

Of the human picturesqueness of this place and people no American scenery or population have an atom ; and isolated, ugly, mean, matter-of-fact farm-houses, or white-washed, clap-boarded, stiff, staring villages, alike without antiquity to make them venerable or picturesqueness to make them tolerable, are all that there represent the exquisitely grouped and coloured masses of building, or solitary specimens of noble time-tinted masonry and architecture, that every half-fortress farmhouse in the plain, or hamlet or convent on the hill-side, present in this paradise of painters.

I must confess to you, however, that the *populousness* of this landscape is not agreeable to me. Absolute loneliness and the absence of every trace of human existence was such a striking feature of the American scenery that I am fond of, where it was possible in some directions to ride several miles without meeting man or woman or seeing their dwellings, that the impossibility of getting out of sight of human presence or human habitation is sometimes irksome to me here.

It is true that this scenery is often wildly sublime in its character ; nevertheless, it is overlooked in almost every direction by villas, monasteries, or villages, and if one escapes from these (as, indeed, I only suppose I *may*, for I have not yet been able to do so), one stumbles among the ruins and gigantic remains of

the great race that has departed, and recollections of men, their works and ways, pursue one everywhere, and surround one with the vestiges of the humanity of bygone centuries.

In the woods of Massachusetts, wild cats, panthers, and bears are yet occasionally to be met with, and the absence of the human element, whether present or past, gives a character of unsympathizing savageness to the scenery ; while here it has so saturated the very soil with its former existence, that where there is nobody, there are millions of ghosts, and that, if the sense of solitude is almost precluded, there is an abiding and depressing one of desolate desertion.

The personal danger which I am told attends walking alone about the woods and hills here, rather impairs my enjoyment of the lovely country. . . .

How lamentably foolish human beings are in their intercourse with each other, to be sure, whether they love, or hate, or whatever they do ! . . .

The epistle of yours that I am now answering I received only this morning, and, owing no one else a previous debt, sat down instantly to discharge my debt to you. Am I honest ? am I just ? If I am not, show me how I am not ; if I am, why, hold your tongue.

The climate of Rome disagreed with me more than any climate of which I have yet had experience. I had a perpetual consciousness of my bilious tendencies, and when the sirocco blew I found it difficult to bear up against that and the permanent causes of depression I always have to struggle against. The air here is undoubtedly freer and purer, but even here we do not

escape from that deadly hot wind, that blast, that I should think came straight from hell, it is so laden with despair.

I liked those pretty lasses, the Ladies T——, very much. All young people interest me, and must be wonderfully displeasing if they do not please me. I met them frequently, but they were naturally full of gaiety and life and spirits, which I naturally was not. The little society I went into in Rome oppressed me dreadfully with its ponderous vapidity, and beyond exchanging a few words with these bonnie girls, and admiring their sweet pleasant faces, I had nothing to do with them. There was much talk about the chances of a marriage between Lord W—— and Lady M——, but though her father left no stone unturned to accomplish this great blessing for his pretty daughter, the matter seemed extremely doubtful when the season ended and they all went off to Naples.

As for Mrs. H——, if she had chronicled me, I am afraid it would scarcely have been with good words. I met her at a party at Mrs. Bunsen's (whose husband is the son of Arnold's friend). . . . The young lady impressed me as one of that numerous class of persons who like to look at a man or woman whose name, for any reason, has been in the public mouth, and probably her curiosity was abundantly satisfied by my being brought up and shown to her. She made no particular impression upon me, but I have no doubt that in sorrow, or joy, or any real genuine condition, instead of what is called society, she might perhaps have interested me. It takes uncommon powers of fascination, or what is even rarer, perfect simplicity, to attract

attention or arouse sympathy in the dead atmosphere of modern civilized social intercourse. All is so drearily dry, smooth, narrow, and commonplace, that the great deeps of life below this stupid stagnant surface are never seen, heard, or thought of.

If your nieces' constancy in following the round of monotonously recurring amusements of a Dublin season amazes me, they would certainly think it much more amazing to pass one's time as I do, wandering about the country alone, dipping one's head and hands into every wayside fountain one comes to, and sitting down by it only to get up again and wander on to the next spring of living water. The symbol is comforting, as well as the element itself, though it is a mere suggestion of the spiritual wells by which one may find rest and refreshment, and pause and ponder on this dusty life's way of ours.

I rejoice the distress in Ireland is less than was anticipated, and am sorry that I cannot sympathize with your nephew's political views [Colonel Taylor was all his life a consistent and fervent Tory]. . . . Politics appear to me, in a free government, to be the especial and proper occupation of a wealthy landowner; and, in such a country as Ireland, I am sure they might furnish a noble field for the exercise of the finest intelligence, and the most devoted patriotism, as well as fill the time with occupation of infinite interest, both of business and benevolence. I should like to be a man with such a work. . . .

My sister's little girl is lovely; she runs about, but does not speak yet. God bless you, my dear friend. Give my love to dear Dorothy. If I can, I will come

and see you both at Torquay this next winter. I hope to be in England in November.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Frascati, Wednesday, July 1st, 1846.

. . . You know of old that the slightest word of blame from you is worse than hot sealing-wax on my skin to me, and that to my self-justifications there is no end. My dear friend, are mental perplexity and despondency, moral difficulty, spiritual apathy, and a general bitter internal struggle with existence, less real trials, less positive troubles, than the most afflicting circumstances generally so classed? I almost doubt it. It may be more difficult to formulate that species of anguish in words, and it may seem a less positive and substantial grief, than some others, but the plagues of the soul are *real* tortures, and I set few sufferings above them, few difficulties and few pains beyond those that have their source, not in the outward dispensation of events, but in the inward conditions of our physical and moral constitutions.

Comparing one lot with another, does not rather the equality of the general doom of trouble and sorrow, of difficulty and struggle, witness the impartiality with which we are governed and our several fates distributed to us? The self-assured and self-relying strength of my constitution (I mean by that my character as well as the temperament from which it results) knows nothing of the trials that beset yours—doubt, distrust, despondency. I have health, mental and physical activity, and a “mounting spirit” of

indomitable enjoyment that buoyantly protects me from sufferings under which others wince and writhe; nevertheless, I have the sufferings proper to my individuality, and I needs must suffer, if it were only that I may be said to *live*, in the fit and proper sense of the term. Our lots are just; by God they are appointed. . . .

But in spite of abiding sorrow, I have often hours of vivid enjoyment, enjoyment which has nothing to do with happiness, or peace, or hope; momentary flashes, bright gleams of exquisite pleasure, of which the capacity seems indestructible in my nature; and whatever bitterness may lie at my heart's core, it still leaves above it a mobile surface of sensibility, which reflects with a sort of ecstasy every ray of light and every form of beauty.

You certainly do not enjoy as I do, and perhaps therefore you do not suffer as acutely; but we err in nothing more than in our estimate of each other's natures, and might more profitably spend the same amount of consideration upon our own lot, and its capabilities of sorrow or of joy, for our own improvement.

Why is it that people do perpetually live below their own pitch? as you very truly describe their living. My return to civilized society makes me ponder much upon the causes of the desperate frivolity and dismal inanity which calls itself by that name, and in the midst of which we live and move and have our being. If people did really enjoy and amuse themselves, nothing could be better; because enjoyment and amusement *are* great goods, and deserve to be laboured for *sufficiently*; but the absence of amuse-

ment, of enjoyment, of life, of spirits, of vivacity, of *vitality*, in the society of the present day, and its so-called diversions, strikes me with astonishment and compassion. For my own part, I hold a good laugh to be inestimable in pleasure and in profit; good nonsense well talked only less admirable than good sense well delivered; and a spirit of fun the next best thing to a serious spirit; and moreover, thank God, they are quite compatible! I think the stupid shallowness of society has some deep causes; one among which is, of course, that by devoting all their energies and all their faculties and all their time to mere amusement, as they have no right to do, people fail of their aim, and are neither well amused nor well occupied, nor well anything else. For if "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," what does the reverse do for him? This passion for cakes and sugar-candy in adult, not to say advanced, life, is rather lugubrious; and of course it strikes me forcibly on my return from America, where the absence of a wholesome spirit of recreation is one of the dreariest features of the national existence. . . .

Here the absolute necessity for mere amusement strikes me as a sort of dry rot in certain portions of the fabric of civilized society, and tends to make it a sapless crumbling mass of appearances—the most ostentatious appearance of all, that of pleasure, being perhaps the hollowest and most unreal.

It takes, I believe, no meaner qualities than intelligence and goodness to enable a person to be thoroughly, heartily, and satisfactorily amused.

Unless you, my dear friend, deprecate our meeting

to part again, I have no intention whatever of leaving England without seeing you once more. I cannot imagine doing such a thing, unless in compliance with your wish, or submission to inevitable necessity. I hope to come down to Torquay, to you and Dorothy, for a few days in the winter.

I am amused at your saying that you don't think any one would feel very comfortable living with me, who had not a great love of truth. Catherine Sedgwick once said it was impossible to tell a lie before me *with any comfort*; and yet I have told my own lies, and certainly sinned, as did not the worthy lady who, being charged with a falsehood, replied unhesitatingly, "Of course, I know it was a lie; *I made it!* I thought it would do good." Another lady of my acquaintance, speaking of a person we both knew, who was indifferent, to say the least of it, upon the question of veracity, exclaimed, "Oh, but Mrs. C—— is really too bad, for she will tell stories *when there isn't the least necessity for it.*"

A—— was a curious instance of the distortion of a very upright nature; for she is undoubtedly a person of great natural truth and integrity, and yet, under the influence of an unfortunate passion, her pre-eminent virtue suffered total eclipse; and she must have condescended, proud and sincere as she was, to much duplicity and much absolute falsehood. Poor girl!

I think one great argument against wrong-doing of every sort is, that it almost invariably, sooner or later, leads to a sacrifice of truth in some way or other; and for that reason, a hearty love of truth is a great preservative from sin in general.

Your letters, directed either to Rome or here, to the care of Edward Sartoris, have reached me hitherto safely and punctually. . . .

My sister particularly begs me to tell you that she rides ("a-horseback, you cuckoo!") between twelve and sixteen miles almost every day. I cannot clearly tell whether she has grown thinner, or I have grown used to her figure.

The heat is beginning to be very oppressive, and I wish I was in England, for I hate hot weather. The whole range of the Sabine Hills, as I see them from my window here, look baked and parched and misty, in the glare beyond the tawny-coloured Campagna. Every flower in the garden has bloomed itself away; the trees loll their heads to the hot gusts of the sirocco, mocking one with the enchanting beckoning gesture of a breeze, while the air is in truth like a blast from an oven or the draught at the mouth of a furnace.

I walk before breakfast, and steep myself in perspiration; and get into the fountain in the garden afterwards, and steep myself in cold water; and by dint of the double process, live in tolerable comfort the rest of the day. And I have no right to complain, for this is temperate to the summer climate of Philadelphia.

Mary and Martha Somerville are paying us a visit of a few days, and I have spent the last two mornings in a vast, princely, empty marble gallery here, teaching them to dance the cachucha; and I wish you could have seen Mrs. Somerville watching our exercises. With her eye-glasses to her eyes, the gentle gentle-

woman sat silently contemplating our evolutions, and as we brought them to a conclusion, and stood (*not* like the Graces) puffing and panting round her, unwilling not to say some kindly word of commendation of our effort, she meekly observed, "It's very pretty, very graceful, very"—a pause—"ladylike." She spoke without any malicious intention whatever, dear lady, but she surely left out the *un*. Do you not think it is time I should begin to think of growing old? or do your nieces do anything more juvenile than this, with all their ball-going?

God bless you, my dear Harriet. Good-bye.

I am ever, as ever yours,

FANNY.

Frascati, Wednesday, September 2nd, 1846.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

. . . I think that the women who have contemplated *any* equality between the sexes have almost all been unmarried, for while the father disposes of the children, whom he maintains, and that this endows him with the power of supreme torture, what mother's heart is proof against the tightening of that screw? At any rate, what number of women is ever likely to be found so organized or so principled as to resist the pressure of this tremendous power? My sister, in speaking to me the other day, of what she would or would not give up to her husband, of conscientious conviction of right, wound up by saying, "But sooner than lose my children, there is *nothing* that I would not do;" and in so speaking, she undoubtedly uttered the feeling of the great majority of women. . . .

We suppose my father has gone to Germany, with some intention of giving readings there. He has been on the Continent now upwards of three months, but we never hear anything definite or precise about his engagements from himself; and in his letters he never mentions place, person, or purpose, where he is going, or where likely to be; so that I can form no idea how long I may be deprived of my letters, which are directed to London, to his care.

My dearest Hal, I have kept no journal since I have been abroad, but such as could be published verbatim. I have kept no record of my own life; I have long felt that to chronicle it would not assist me in enduring it. . . . Indeed, since I came to Italy, I should have kept no diary at all, but that my doing so was suggested to me as a possible means of earning something towards my present support, and with that view I have noted what I have seen, much to my own disgust and dissatisfaction; for I feel very strongly my own inability to give any fresh interest to a mere superficial description of things and places seen and known by everybody, and written about by all the world and his wife, for the last hundred years. Nevertheless, I have done it; because I could not possibly neglect any means whatever that were pointed out to me of helping myself, and relieving others from helping me. . . . I have given up my walk and my dip in the fountain before breakfast. We ride for three or four hours every afternoon, and a walk of two hours in the morning besides seemed to me, upon reflection, a disproportionate allowance of mere physical exercise for a creature endowed with brains as well as arms and

legs. . . . Upon the whole, we have reason to be grateful for the health we have all of us enjoyed. There has been a great deal of violent and dangerous illness among the English residents passing the summer at Frascati and Albano; quite enough indeed, I think, to justify the ill repute of unhealthiness with which the whole of this beautiful region is branded. Our whole family has escaped all serious inconvenience, either from the malaria usual to the place, or the unusual heat of the summer; the children especially have been in admirable health and lovely looks, the whole time we have been here. . . .

God bless you, my dearest Hal! I am afraid it is true that I often appear wanting in charity towards the vices and follies of my fellow-creatures; and yet I really have a great deal more than my outbreaks of vehement denunciation would seem to indicate; and of one thing I am sure, that with regard to any wrong or injury committed against myself, a very short time enables me not only to forgive it, but to perceive all the rational excuses and attenuations that it admits of. At least I think this is so; but perhaps I deceive myself. I certainly am not conscious of any bitterness of heart towards any one. . . . I believe it is only in the first perception of evil or sense of injury that I am unmeasured or unreasonable in my expression of condemnation—but you know, my dear, *suddenness* is the curse of my nature. . . . But my self-love always springs up against the shadow of blame, and so you need pay no heed to what I say in self-justification. If I am censured justly, I shall accept the reproof inwardly, whatever outward show I may make of

defending myself against it ; for the grace of humility is even more deficient in me than that of charity, and to submit graciously to what seems to me unjust blame is hitherto a virtue I do not possess at all.

[After my return to England, I resumed the exercise of my theatrical profession ; the less distasteful occupation of giving public readings, which I adopted subsequently, was not then open to me. My father was giving readings from Shakespeare, and it was impossible for me to thrust my sickle into a field he was reaping so successfully. I therefore returned to the stage : under what disadvantageously altered circumstances it is needless to say.

A stout, middle-aged, not particularly good-looking woman, such as I then was, is not a very attractive representative of Juliet or Julia ; nor had I, in the retirement of nine years of private life, improved by study or experience my talent for acting, such as it was. I had hardly entered the theatre during all those years, and my thoughts had as seldom reverted to anything connected with my former occupation. While losing, therefore, the few personal qualifications (of which the principal one was youth) I ever possessed for the younger heroines of the drama, I had gained none but age as a representative of its weightier female personages—Lady Macbeth, Queen Katherine, etc.

Thus, even less well fitted than when first I came out for the work I was again undertaking, I had the additional disadvantage of being an extremely incompetent woman of business ; and having now to make

my own bargains in the market of public exhibition, I did so with total want of knowledge and experience to guide me in my dealings with the persons from whom I had to seek employment.

I found it difficult to obtain an engagement in London; but Mr. Knowles, of the Manchester Theatre, very liberally offered me such terms as I was thankful to accept; and I there made my first appearance on my return to the stage.

Among the various changes which I had to encounter in doing so, one that might appear trivial enough occasioned me no little annoyance. The inevitable rouge, rendered really indispensable by the ghastly effect of the gas-light illumination of the stage, had always been one of its minor disagreeables to me; but I now found, that in addition to rouged cheeks, my fair theatrical cotemporaries—fair though they might be—literally whitewashed their necks, shoulders, arms, and hands; a practice which I found it impossible to adopt; and in spite of my zealous friend Henry Greville's rather indignant expostulation, to the effect that what so beautiful a woman as Madame Grisi condescended to do, for the improvement of her natural charms, was not to be disdained by a person so comparatively ugly, I steadily refused to make a whited sepulchre of *that* description, of myself, and continued to confront the public with my own skin, looking, probably, like a gipsy, or, when in proximity with any feminine coadjutor, like a bronze figure arm-in-arm with a plaster-of-Paris cast.

Before, however, beginning my new existence of professional toil, I stayed a few days at Bannisters, with

Mrs. FitzHugh and my dear friend, her daughter Emily.]

Bannisters, Tuesday, 13th, 1846.

You say, my dear Hal, that you see Emily and me perpetually, in various positions, holding various conversations. Had you a vision of us this morning, by the comfortable fire in my room, I reading, and she listening to, your letter? . . .

Thank you, my dear friend, for your *flagellatory* recipe, which I beg to decline. The sponging with vinegar and water I do practise every morning, and as I persevere in it until my fingers can hardly hold the sponge for cold, and my throat is as crimson as if it were flayed, I hope it will answer the same purpose as lashing myself, which I object to, partly, I suppose, for Sancho Panza's reasons, and partly because of its great resemblance to, not to say identity with, the superstitious practices of the idolatrous and benighted Roman Catholic Church.

The amount of medical advice and assistance which I have received since I have been restored to the affectionate society of my dear Emily and her kind mother, is hardly to be told. . . .

I shall not answer your letter seriously: I am convinced it is bad for you. I believe Dorothy never laughs (you know the Devil in "Faust" says the Almighty never does), and I am satisfied that what you are languishing for is a little *absurdity*, which she cannot by any possibility afford you.

How I wish I was with you! because, though I am no more absurd than that sublime woman, Dorothy, I

at least know how to take the best advantage, both for you and myself, of the great gifts you possess in that line; and the mutual sweetness and utility of our intercourse is, I am persuaded, principally owing to the judicious use I make of the extraordinary amount of absurdity it has pleased Heaven to vouchsafe you, my most precious friend.

And so you think I shall have plenty of "admirable friends" for my "gay hours" (!!!), but shall be glad to fall back, in my less delightful ones, upon the devoted affection of—you? (Oh, Harriet! oughtn't you to be ashamed of yourself?)

I have more friends, I humbly and devoutly thank God for them, than almost any one I know; those I depend upon, I can count upon the fingers of one hand, and you are the *thumb*.

In the useless struggle you persist in making to be reasonable (why don't you give it up? I've known you hopelessly at it now forty years or thereabouts), you really make use of very singular and, permit me to say, inappropriate language. After detailing, in a manner that nearly made me cry and laugh with distress for you and disapprobation of you, all your unnecessary agonies of anxiety about me, you suddenly rein yourself up with an extra-reasonable jerk, and say that "the foolish importance you attach to *trifles* is as great as ever."

Now, my dearest friend, for such you undoubtedly are, allow me to observe that this mode of speaking of me does not appear to me either reasonable or appropriate. From what point of view I can appear a *trifle* to the most partial and rational of my friends, I am at

a loss to conjecture. The parallel seems to me to halt on all its feet. A *white, light, sweet*, and *agreeable* article of human consumption bears, I apprehend, extremely small affinity to a *dark, heavy, tart*, and *uneatable* female. However, if you find that this, to me, singularly distorted mode of viewing facts assists your hitherto unsuccessful efforts at mental and moral equipoise, I am perfectly willing to be a trifle in your estimation, or indeed anywhere but on your table.

The pretty, pretty plan you devise for our meeting here during Passion week, dear Hal, is a baseless vision. Our friends go up to London the week after next, and I do not know when I shall be able again to stay so far from it.

I have written to Moxon about the publication of my journal, and I received a note from him this morning, intimating his purpose of visiting me here, in the course of to-day, at which I feel rather nervously dismayed. . . . There is a great quantity of it, and I suppose my return to the stage may perhaps have some effect in increasing its sale.

Emily and I walk every day together, up and down the shrubbery, and round the gardens; and innumerable are the ejaculations of "Oh, how I wish dear Hal was with us!" You are our proper complement, the missing side of the triangle, and it is unnatural for us two to be together here without you.

Mrs. FitzHugh is certainly a wonderful old woman, especially in her kindness and happy, easy cheerfulness. . . .

We drive every day for about an hour in the pony-

carriage, and walk again for about half an hour afterwards. . . .

And now, God bless you, my dearest Hal. I long to see you and am most thankful for all the tender, devoted, anxious affection you bestow on me ; I am unspeakably *grateful* to you. Kiss dear Dorothy for me, and tell her for goodness' sake to exert herself, and either be, or allow you to be, slightly ridiculous, or she will die of perfection, and you of a plethora of absurdity, or ridiculousness *rentré*—struck in, as the French say.

I forgot to tell you that — has declined my terms, but offered me others, which I have declined. I have still two other managers, with one of whom I think I may perhaps be able to come to some agreement.

Since writing thus far, I have seen Moxon, who has offered me far more than I expected for my journal before reading it ; begging me to let him pay me a portion of it at once, and adding that if, upon perusal of the manuscript, he thinks his profits likely to warrant his giving me more than the sum now named, he should not consider himself justified in not doing so by the fact of his having offered me less.

Good-bye, dearest.

Yours ever,
FANNY.

[It is impossible to have been more generous than Mr. Moxon was in this whole transaction. While talking about the dealings of booksellers with authors, he said that he always bore in mind the liberality he had

benefited by when, starting in business a poor and obscure publisher, he had been munificently assisted by Rogers, whose timely aid had laid the foundation of his prosperity. "As I was dealt by," he said, "I endeavour to deal by others, and should be glad to inspire them with the grateful regard towards me which I shall always retain for him." Rogers surely did himself more injustice by his tongue than all his enemies put together could have done him; his acts of kindly generosity were almost as frequent as his bitter, biting, cruel words.]

Bannisters, Saturday, 16th.

Yes, my dear Hal, I do intend to correct my own proofs (I thought my proofs corrected me). . . .

I have just returned from a delightful visit of two hours, which our dear friend Emily contrived for me, to —, the dentist! Not content with cheering and soothing my sadder hours with the number and variety of her medical resources (pills, draughts, doses, potions, lotions, lozenges, etc.), her ever active and considerate affection hit upon this agreeable method of relieving my stay at Bannisters of any possible tedium, and two hours of the darkest, dampest, dreariest winter weather have thus been charmed away through her tender and ingenious solicitude for my enjoyment.

My dear Hal, what you say about laughing *with* people, as an *instead* for laughing *at* them, is, like most things you say, frightful nonsense. And what sort of a laugh, moreover, is it that you offer that unfortunate Dorothy for her feeble participation? Nothing of a healthy, wholesome, vigorous, vital, individual, per-

sonal kind ; but some pitiful pretence of wit or humour, having for its vague or indefinite object, ideal, or general, abstract, impersonal, or, so to speak, invisible intangible subjects, wanting all the vivacious pungent stimulus that belongs to real individual absurdity, and the direct ridicule of it, judiciously and dexterously applied ; the only efficient—I had almost said legitimate—object of a rational creature's amusement. If Dorothy depends upon you for her entertainment (otherwise than as you involuntarily, unconsciously, naturally, and simply, furnish it to me), I pity her ; and if you depend upon her for yours, I pity you still more—for I doubt if even I, according to my own system, could extract any from her, she is so *painfully unridiculous*. You must be deplorably dull together, I am—certain, I was going to say—satisfied ; but that's neither kind nor civil, and I heartily wish for both *your* sakes that I was with you.

I am not sure that that visit may not be accomplished yet ; for my reappearance on the stage does not seem likely to take place so very immediately but that I might perhaps contrive to run down to you for a short time. But, indeed, all my concerns are like so many pennies tossed up in the air for “heads or tails,” and I cannot tell how they will fall, or what results I may arrive at.

I have been asked to go down to Manchester, to act, and if I have any great difficulty or delay to encounter in finding an engagement in London, I shall probably do so. . . . The step I am about to take is so painful to me that all petty annoyances and minor vexations lose their poignancy in the contemplation

of it (*à quelque chose—à bien des choses malheur est bon*), and having at length made up my mind to it, smaller *repugnancies* connected with it have ceased to affect me with any acuteness. . . .

Moxon cannot publish my Italian journal immediately, because the whole of the American edition must be ready to go to press before he brings it out here. I suppose it will come out some time after Easter. Emily told you of his first offer for it, and of his gallant mode of making it. He is surely a pearl and a pattern of publishers.

Kiss that facetious "Virgin Martyr" for me. Such a laugh as you two are likely to get up together! I declare it brings the tears to my eyes to think of it.

I rejoice in your account of H—— W——. It must be a blessing to every one belonging to him to see him do well such a duty as that of an Irish proprietor, in these most miserable times.

I have at present nothing further to impart to you, but the newest news, that I am

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The last sentence of this letter refers to the failure of the potato-crop, and the consequent terrible famine that desolated Ireland.]

10, Park Place, St. James's, February 1st, 1857.

I feel almost certain, my dear Hal, that it will be better for me to be *alone* when I come out at Manchester than to have you with me, even if in all other respects it were expedient you should be there. My

strength is much impaired, my nerves terribly shattered, and to see reflected in eyes that I love that pity for me which I shall feel only too keenly for myself, on the first night of my return to the stage, might, I fear, completely break down my courage. I am glad for this reason that I am to come out at Manchester, where I know nobody, and not in London, where, although I might not distinguish them, I should know that not a few who cared for me, and were sorry for me, were among my spectators. I am now so little able to resist the slightest appeal to my feelings, that at the play (to which I have been twice lately), the mere sound of human voices simulating distress has shaken and affected me to a strange degree, and this in pieces of a common and uninteresting description. A mere exclamation of pain or sorrow makes me shudder from head to foot. Judge how ill prepared I am to fulfil the task I am about to undertake. . . .

This, however, is one of the most painful aspects of my work. It has a more encouraging one. It is an immense thing for me to be still able to work at all, and keep myself from helpless dependence upon any one. . . . The occupation, the mere *business* of the business, will, I am persuaded, be good rather than bad for me; for though one may be strong against sorrow, sorrow and inactivity combined are too much for any strength. Such a burden might not kill one, but destroy one's vitality to a degree just short of, and therefore worse than, death—crush, instead of killing and releasing one. . . .

I was reading over "The Hunchback" last night, and could not go through the scenes between Julia

and Clifford, when he assumes the character of Lord Rochdale's secretary, without an agony of crying. I do not see how I am ever to act it again intelligibly, but I suppose when I *must* do it I *shall*. Things that have to be done, are done, somehow or other.

God bless you, my dear Hal.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

One word to Dorothy.

Now, my beloved and best Dorothy, haven't you enough to do with that most troublesome soul, Harriet, without being my "good angel" too? [Miss W—— often went by the name of Harriet's "good angel."] I have never seen mine; but if I have one I should think he or she must be a sort of spiritual heavenly steam-engine, a *three-hundred angel-power*, in order effectually to take care of me.

My dearest Hal, I have missed the dear nuisance of your letters so dreadfully these few days past, that I began seriously to meditate writing to you to know if I had offended you in any way. As for how I fare in this cold weather, the weather is nothing to me, and I used not to mind cold at all, but rather to like it; but my flesh is forsaking my bones at such a rate, that I am beginning to shiver for want of covering, and I think to be reduced to a skeleton—a live one, I mean—while the thermometer is as low as it is, will be very uncomfortable.

The satisfaction I had in my visit to my brother was that of seeing a person for whom I have a very



warm affection, and, in some respects, a very sincere admiration. I believe, too, it was a comfort to poor John to see me, and receive the expressions of my love and sympathy. . . . For his warm heart, his truthfulness and great simplicity of character, his worldly poverty, his great intellectual wealth, but, above all, for that he is my brother, I love him. He and his children are living in a poor small cottage, on a wild corner of common near Cassiobury. How I thought of our old—no, our young days, driving along past “The Grove” and the Cassiobury Park paling. My brother’s present home is certainly not an extravagant residence, and though, of course, sufficient for absolute necessary comfort (how much comfort is *necessary*?), is nothing more. . . . John has advertised in the *Times* for a pupil to prepare for college, and should he be able to obtain one, it would, of course, materially assist him. In the mean time he is working with infinite ardour and industry upon an important work, the “History of the English Law.” A friend of his, whom I met there, who is, I think, a competent judge, which, of course, I am not, of any such matter, assured me that the work was one of great erudition and research, but at the same time so dry and difficult, and therefore little likely to be popular, that it would not be easy to persuade any publisher to undertake it. He, Mr. B——, carried the first volume, which is complete, to town with him, to show it to persons capable of appreciating it, and endeavour to get it a little known, so as to procure an offer for its publication. Poor John! his perseverance in the studies he loves is very great, his devotion to them very deep, and if

he could only live upon his means with his beloved mistress, Learning, I should think he had made a noble and honourable choice, however bitterly disappointed my father may feel at his not choosing to follow more lucrative pursuits.

I am going to act in *Dublin*. I have neither time nor space for more.

God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

10, *Park Place*, *Friday*, 12th, 1847.

Direct to me at Manchester, "Theatre Royal," my dear Hal, that is all; or, indeed, I should prefer your directing to the Albion Hotel, that same house where you and I were so charmed by the sunlight on the carpet.

You say I do not know the value of letters. I think I do, for if I had not the very highest value for them I should long ago have given way to my detestation of writing, and put an end to my innumerable correspondences. Your letters have more than once been snatched up by me, and pressed to my lips; so have my sister's. . . . I hate writing, it is true, but am content to pay that price for the intercourse of my friends; and though I may not love letters as you do, I do think I have a reasonable appreciation of their value.

I share in your feeling, dearest Harriet, about my being in Dublin while you are absent from it. I do not know that it seems to me "wrong," but it certainly does seem as unnatural as that there should be a

theatre open in Dublin at all at this time, when famine and such dire distress are prevailing in parts of the country.

I am troubled, too, at the uncertainty of how and when we are to meet; and the reason why these various considerations do not, perhaps, engross so much of my thoughts as they do of yours, is because I have so many immediate and necessarily absorbing claims upon my attention.

I incline with you, however, to think that I shall not go to Dublin. I have not heard again from the manager, and I begin to hope that he has thought better of his invitation to me. As my work is a matter of necessity, I could not, of course, refuse an engagement in Dublin; but it does seem monstrous that there should be people willing to pay for theatrical entertainments there at this time.

If I do not go I shall lose an opportunity of seeing my brother Henry, which I am looking forward to with great pleasure—the only pleasure in the whole expedition, since you will not be there, which will indeed seem most strange and very *inappropriate*.

Harriet, *you* certainly have a passion for writing, for in your last you have repeated every word I said about my brother John, just as if you had invented it yourself. You are like Ariel, very; and I am like Prospero, very (“Dull thing! I said so”); or, no, I am like Falstaff, to be sure, and you like Prince Hal, with “damnable iteration.” . . .

Various of my London men friends threaten coming down to Manchester during my engagement there; Charles and Henry Greville, Chorley, and even Moxon,

who declared, if my play was brought out, he must be in the pit the first night to see it. [This was my play called "An English Tragedy," which there was some talk of bringing out at Manchester.] I dare say the courage of all of them will give out before this bitter cold, and I shall not be sorry if it does, for I want no sympathizers to make me pitiful over myself.

I am tolerably well just now, and really believe that when once I am fairly out of the fangs of the dressmakers I shall gather strength rapidly.

The cruelest fact in my fate at present is that I have actually not been able to get all my things made here, and am taking the materials for my Juliet and Queen Katharine dresses to be made up at Manchester; and this is horrid, because, but for this, my off evenings would have really been seasons of rest and quiet. However, it is of no use lamenting over any one detail of such a whole as this business. . . .

Give my love to dear Dorothy. She is half my good angel, by her own voluntary assumption of the character. . . .

Do not be troubled overmuch for or about me, my dearest friend; but commend me, as I do you and myself, to God, and believe me

Ever yours,
FANNY.

10, Park Place, Saturday Evening.

MY DEAR HAL,

I never did, and I never shall, offer anything I write to anybody. If my friends ask me for anything I write, I will get it for them, just as I would

anything else they ask me to get or to do for them; but I have no idea of volunteering such a bestowal upon anybody. Emily asked me for a copy of my "Year of Consolation," and I have promised her one, and I will certainly give you one if you wish for it. As for accounting, by any process of reasoning of mine, for your desire to have my book, I am quite unable to do so.

My love for my friends would never make me wish to read their books, unless I thought their books likely to be worth reading. Now, I cannot assume this with regard to my own, especially as I don't believe it.

Our friends' characters, their love for us, and ours for them, is the stuff of which our adhesion is made; and unless I had a genius for a friend, I should care little for any other mental exhibitions from those I loved than those their daily intercourse afforded me. In personal intercourse, unless a person is a genius, you really get that which is best intellectually, as well as every other way, from your friend. Even in the case of a great genius, I should think his daily intercourse likely to be more valuable in an intellectual point of view than his best works; but then, of such a mind one would naturally wish to possess all and every product that one could obtain. If I thought myself a genius, I might offer you my books unasked—perhaps.

I shall be at the Albion at Manchester, and if you wish to hear from me, you will do well to write to me there. . . .

I have had a most terrible day of fatigue and worry, breaking my back with packing my things, and my heart with paying my bills.

Dear Henry Greville goes to within fifty miles of Manchester with me to-morrow, and stays at a friend's house, whence he and Alfred Potocki purpose coming on for the play on Tuesday evening. After all, I am not sorry he is coming; his regard for me is not of a sort to make me dread the weakening effect of his sympathy, and it will be comfortable to know that among that strange audience I have just such a kind well-wisher as he is, to keep up whatever courage I have.

Perhaps you may yet see me in Dublin, for the manager wishes me to renew my engagement after the first six nights; and, of course, if he pays me my terms, I shall be glad to remain there as long as he likes.

Give my dear love to dear Dorothy. I am thoroughly worn out, and feel quite unwell; and oh, how cold it will be in that railroad carriage to-morrow!

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Albion Hotel, Manchester, Monday, 15th.

MY DEAR HAL,

I cannot tell you exactly *all* why I dislike writing letters, because my dislike is made up of so many elements. One reason is, that the limits of a letter do not permit of one's saying satisfactorily what one has to say upon any subject. I think frequently that my letters must be highly unsatisfactory because of my tendency to discussion, which makes them more like imperfect essays than letters, the chief charm and

use of which is to tell of daily events, interests, and occurrences; how one is, what one does, where one goes, etc. Now, while I fear my letters must be unsatisfactory to my friends because they seldom contain details of this sort, they are still more so to me, because I have neither room nor time in them to say anything about anything as I wish to say it. Then, I have an indescribable impatience of the mere mechanical process.

You say that I talk, though I do not write, willingly to my friends, but whenever I get upon any subject that interests me, with anybody whom I am not afraid of wearying, I talk till I have said all I have to say; and though I never spoke about anything that I cared for without afterwards perceiving that I had left unsaid many important things upon the subject while I spoke, I spoke all that came into my mind at the time. In writing, this is never the case, and fast as my pen flies, it seems to me to stick to the paper; while in speaking, what with my voice, my face, and my whole body, I manage to convey an immensity of matter (stuff, you know, I mean), in an incredibly short time. Impatience of all my limitations, therefore, is one cause of my dislike to letter-writing.

You say that I do not object to conversation, though I do to correspondence: and it is quite true that I sometimes have great pleasure in talking; but if I had to talk, even upon the subjects that interest me most, as much as I have to write in the discharge of my daily correspondence, I should die of exhaustion, and fancy, too, that I was guilty of a reprehensible waste of time. That I am doing what gives my

friends pleasure, and is but their due, alone prevents my thinking my letter-writing a waste of time. As therefore it is not to me, as to you, a pleasurable occupation in itself, I do not think it can be compared with "reading Shakespeare, Schiller," or indeed any book worth reading. The exercise of justice towards, and consideration for, others is a form of virtue, and *therefore* letter-writing is, in some cases, a good employment of time.

I have a desire for mental culture, only equalled by my sense of my profound ignorance, and the feeling of how little knowledge is attained, even by scholars leading the most active and assiduously studious existences.

My delight in my own superficial miscellaneous reading is not so much for the information I retain (for I forget, or at least seem to do so, much of what I read), as for the sense of mental activity produced at the time, by reading; and though I forget much, something doubtless remains, upon the whole.

Knowledge, upon any subject, is an enchanting *curiosity* to me; fine writing on elevated subjects is a source of the liveliest pleasure to me; in all kinds of good poetry I find exquisite enjoyment; and not having a particle of satisfaction in letter-writing for its own sake, I cannot admit any parallel between reading and writing (whatever I might think of arithmetic). I have sometimes fancied, too, that but for the amount of letter-writing I perform, I might (perhaps) write carefully and satisfactorily something that might (perhaps) be worth reading, something that might (perhaps) in some degree approach my standard of a tolerably

good literary production—some novel or play, some work of imagination—and that my much letter-writing is against this; but I dare say this is a mistaken notion, and that I should never, under any circumstances, write anything worth anything.

I have always desired much to cultivate the accomplishment of drawing; it is an admirable sedative—a soothing, absorbing, and satisfactory pursuit; but I have never found time to follow it up steadily, though snatching at it now and then according as opportunity favoured me. I give but little time to my music now (though some every day, because I will not let go anything I have once possessed); for I shall never be a proficient in it, and I already have as much of it at my command as answers my need of it as a recreation. Any of these occupations is more agreeable to me than letter-writing; so is needlework, so is walking out, so is—almost anything else I could do. Now, as Shylock says, “Are you answered yet?”

I should be sorry my brother Henry went to the trouble or expense of coming over to Manchester or Liverpool to see me, as there is every probability of my being in Dublin early in March, where I shall act till the 22nd, and perhaps longer.

I have the privilege of sitting with an engraving of Lord Wilton, in his peer's robes, *hung* opposite to me—enough surely for any reasonable woman's happiness. . . .

God bless you, dear; give my love to dear Dorothy. I rejoice for her that the cold is gone.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

My kind friend Henry Greville, and that very charming young Alfred Potocki, brother of the Austrian Ambassadors, Madame de Dietrichstein, and a great friend of Henry's, came down with me half way, yesterday ; they stopped at a friend's house about fifty miles from Manchester, and come up to-morrow to see the play, so that I shall have the comfort of people that I like, and not the trial of people that I love, near me on that occasion.

I am not very nervous about my *plunge* ; the only thing that I dread is the noise (noise of any sort being what my nerves can no longer endure at all) which I am afraid may greet me. I wish I could avoid my "reception," as it is called, because any loud sound shakes me now from head to foot ; this is the one thing that I do dread—I have gained some self-possession and strength in these past years, and I hope my acting itself, as well as my comfort in acting, may benefit by my increased self-command. Poor Hayes (my maid) says that the peace of being alone with me, after our late lodging, is like having left *Hell* ; we shall see what she says to-morrow night at the theatre,—poor thing. Farewell.

Albion Hotel, Manchester, Wednesday, 17th.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I acted Julia in "The Hunchback" last night (the first time for thirteen years) ; got up this morning with a dreadful cough and sore throat, the effect of over-exertion and exposure ; went to rehearsal after breakfast, rehearsed Lady Macbeth and Juliana in "The Honeymoon" (a *dancing* part!) ; have written to three

managers, from whom I have received "proposals;" have despatched accounts of myself to my father, and sundry of my friends; have corrected forty pages of proof of my Italian journal; have prepared all my dresses for to-morrow; have received sundry visits (among others, that of a doctor, whom I was obliged to send for), and have wished that I had not had so much to do.

I am so far satisfied with my last night's experiment, that I think it has proved that my strength will serve to go through this sort of labour for a couple of years; and I hope during that time, by moving from one place to another, that my attraction may hold out sufficiently to enable me to secure the small capital upon which I can contrive to live independently.

The theatre here is beautiful; the company very fair; the plays are well and carefully got up. The audience were most exceedingly kind and cordial to me, and I think I have every reason to be thankful, and grateful, and more than satisfied. The manager wants me to renew my engagement, which is a sign, I suppose, that he is satisfied too.

With affectionate respects to my lord, believe me, my dear Lady Dacre,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Manchester, Thursday, 18th.

I cannot tell how many books have been written by geniuses, dear Hal, and therefore, being unable to answer the first question in your letter, pass on to the next.

The people that I have to deal with here, seem to me very much like all other people, everywhere else. The proprietor and manager of the theatre is an active, enterprising, intelligent man, who knows the *value* of liberality, and that generosity is sometimes the most remunerative as well as amiable and popular line of action. He is a shrewd man of business, a little rough in his manner, but kindly and good-natured withal, and extremely civil and considerate to me. He is anxious that I should renew my engagement, and I shall be very willing to do so, on my return from Dublin.

My stage-manager is a brother of James Wallack, well-bred, and pleasant to deal with, and also very kind and courteous to me. Everybody in the theatre is civil and good to me, and I am heartily grateful to them all. As for my good host and hostess of the Albion, they really look after me in the most devoted and affectionate manner, so that I am quite of my poor maid's opinion, that this is a paradise of peace and comfort compared with Mrs. ——'s lodging-house.

My dressing-room at the theatre is wretched in point of size and situation, being not much larger than this sheet of paper, and up a sort of steep ladder staircase: in other respects, it is tidy enough, and infinitely better than the dark barrack-room you remember me dressing in when I was in Manchester years ago, when I was a girl—alas!—I don't mean a pun! It is not the same theatre, but a new one, built by the Mr. Knowles who engaged me to act here, and one of the prettiest, brightest, and most elegant playhouses I ever saw; admirable for the voice, and of a most judicious size

and shape. Unfortunately, a large hotel has been built immediately adjoining it (I suspect by the same person, who is a great speculator, and apt, I should think, to have many, if not too many, irons in the fire), and the space that should have been appropriated to the accommodation of the actors, behind the scenes in the theatre, has been sacrificed to the adjoining building, which is a pity.

If I were to tell you the names of the people who act with me, you would be none the wiser. The company is a very fair one indeed, and might be an excellent one, if they were not all too great geniuses either to learn or to rehearse their parts. The French do not put the flimsiest vaudeville upon the stage without rehearsing it for *three months*; here, however, and everywhere else in England, people play such parts as Macbeth with no more than three rehearsals; and I am going to act this evening in the "Honeymoon," with a gentleman who, filling the principal part in the piece, has not thought fit to attend at the rehearsal; so that though I was there, I may say in fact that I have had no rehearsal of it,—which is businesslike and pleasant.

Oh, my dear Hal, I strive to judge of my position as reasonably as I can! I do hope that in spite of the loss of youth, of person, and feeling (which latter communicates itself even to acting), I may be able to fill some parts better than I did formerly. I have no longer any nervousness to contend with—only a sense of the duty I owe to my employers and spectators, to take the utmost pains, and do my work as well as I possibly can for them.

My physical power of voice and delivery is not diminished, which is good for tragedy; my self-possession is increased, which ought to be good for comedy; and I do trust I may succeed, at least sufficiently to be able, by going from one place to another, and returning to America when I have worn out my public favour here—say, in two years,—to make what will enable me to live independently, though probably upon very small means.

I write this after my first night's performance, and I trust my views are not unreasonable. How I wondered at myself, as I stood at the side scene the other night, without any quickening of the pulse or beating of the heart—thanks to the far other experiences I have gone through, which have left me small sensibility for stage apprehensions; and yet I could hardly have believed it possible that I should have been as little nervous as I was. When I went on, however, I had to encounter the only thing I had dreaded; and the loud burst of public welcome (suggestive of how many associations, and what a contrast!) shocked me from head to foot, and tried my nerves to a degree that affected my performance unfavourably through several scenes.

But this was my first appearance after thirteen years of absence from the stage; and, of course, no second emotion of the kind awaits me. The exertion and exposure of the performance gave me a violent cold and sore throat, and I have been obliged to send for a doctor. I had *two* rehearsals yesterday, which did not mend matters, but I have bolstered myself up *pro tem.*, and what with inhaling hot water and

swathing my throat in cold, and lozenges and gargles, etc., I hope to fight through without breaking down. . . . I have heard from Catherine Sedgwick, who says that it is a long time since she heard from you or Emily. She adds: "I shall be very glad to hear from them again. In your absence, I had nothing to give interest to my letters to them, and I have not written; and they, naturally, had no sufficient motive to write to me, so that I have been in complete ignorance about them. Harriet S—— I reckon among my friends for both worlds."

God bless you, my dear Hal. Give dear Dorothy my love.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Manchester; Tuesday, 23rd.

A thousand thanks, my dear Lady Dacre, for all your kind inquiries about, and sympathy in, my concerns. I am going on prosperously. The theatre is quite full when I play, in spite of the very bad weather, and I think my employer can afford to pay me, without grudging, my nightly salary.

I think you are right in saying I am my own best critic; my mother being gone, I believe I really am so.

I have played, since I last wrote to you, Juliana, in the "Honeymoon," a rather pretty, foolish part, which I act accordingly; Lady Macbeth, which I never could, and cannot, and never *shall can* act; and Juliet, which, I suppose, I play neither better nor worse than formerly, but which, naturally, I am no longer personally fit to represent.

I am not very well, for the returning to such labour as this after thirteen years disuse of it, and at thirty-seven years of age, is a severe physical trial, and has, of course, exhausted me very much. Nothing more, however, ails me than fatigue, and I have no doubt that a few more nights' "hard use" will enable me to stand steady under my new load of heavy circumstance.

You have asked me for newspaper reports, and I send them to you. You know my feeling about such things, but that is nothing to the purpose; if you can care for such praise, or dispraise of me, it is no less than my duty to furnish you with it, at your request, if I can. You know I never read critiques, favourable or unfavourable, myself, so I do not even know what I send you.

Good-bye. Remember me respectfully and affectionately to Lord Dacre, and believe me ever

Yours truly,

FANNY.

Manchester, Thursday, 25th.

DEAR HAL,

Mr. H. F. Chorley I believe to be a great friend of mine, and an uncommonly honest man, but I may be mistaken in both points. Your inquiry about my health I cannot answer very triumphantly. I am not well, and my feet and ankles swell so before I have stood five minutes on the stage, that the prolonged standing in shoes, which, though originally loose for me, become absolute instruments of torture, like those infamous "boots" of martyring memory,

is a terrible physical ordeal for either a tragic or comic heroine—who had need indeed be something of a real one to endure it.

Some of this trouble is due to general debility, and some to the long unaccustomed effort of so much standing, and will, I trust, gradually subside as I grow stronger and more used to my work. . . .

I acted Juliet last night, and I am very weary to-day, but thankful to have my most arduous part well over.

Give my love to dear Dorothy. I am very sorry to hear of her being so unwell, for I know how anxious you must be about her. Thank her for her kind words to me. . . .

God bless you, my dear.

I am ever as ever, yours,

FANNY.

Manchester, Friday, 26th.

DEAR HAL,

My throat has given me no more trouble since my first night's acting. I have a pertinacious cough, and a tremendous cold in my head, which are nuisances; but I am free from irritation in the throat, and have found hitherto, in my performances, my voice stronger, instead of weaker, than it was. . . . I am better than I was last week, and have no doubt I shall acquire strength as I go on, as my first start in this dismal work did not quite break me down.

The people here have shown me the most extreme kindness and hospitality, and I have had invitations to dine out every day this week that I have not acted.

My brother Henry has come over from Dublin, to spend a couple of days with me, and his visit has been an immense pleasure and comfort to me.

My time, thank God, is so incessantly occupied with all kinds of business—writing letters to managers, acquaintances, and friends; rehearsing, acting, looking after my dresses, correcting proof-sheets, and receiving visits—that I have no leisure but what I spend in sleep.

Henry has promised to mount me on a horse of his, when I get to Dublin; and I am sure that my favourite exercise will be of the greatest benefit to me.

The actors here are not more inattentive than they generally are, everywhere, to their business; their carelessness and want of conscience about it is nothing new to me, and all my bygone professional experience had fully prepared me for it. The company here is a better one than I shall probably find anywhere, even in London; and I have the advantage of having to do with a very civil, considerate, and obliging stage-manager.

I have made, at present, no further engagement for acting here. I shall spend Passion week at Sutton Park, with the Arkwrights, who have written to beg me to do so, and whose vicinity to this place makes that arrangement every way best for me, as in Easter week I am to act in Manchester again, for the benefit of the above-mentioned courteous stage-manager. From the 12th to the 17th of April, I act at Bath and Bristol; and after that I think it is probable I shall act for a short time in London,—but this is uncertain.

Your questions, for which you apologize, are particularly agreeable to me, as, in spite of the ready invention and fluent utterance on which you compliment me, I am always charmed to have the subject of my letters suggested to me by the questions of my friends.

As my engagement in Dublin, like all the engagements I make, is *a nightly one*, if it does not answer to the manager I shall of course immediately put an end to it. I am secured from loss by payment after each performance, but should never think of taking what I do not bring to my employer.

Mr. Calcraft writes me that he is sanguine about the engagement, in spite of the public distress, and wants me to leave three nights open after the 22nd for the extension of it. We shall see.

God bless you, dear Hal. Give my affectionate love to Dorothy. I am most happy to hear she is better. The kindness of the Manchester people has filled my room with flowers, my "good angels," about which I am becoming every day more superstitious, for I am never four and twenty hours in a place, that some do not make their appearance, to cheer and comfort me. Farewell.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Birmingham, Sunday, 28th.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I played last night for the last time in Manchester. The house was immensely full, and when I went on the stage after the piece, so loud and long and

cordial were they in their kind demonstrations of goodwill to me, that what with the exhaustion of a whole day's packing (which I have to do for myself, my maid being utterly incompetent), and the getting through my part, the whole thing was too much for me, and I turned quite faint, and all but fell down on the stage. But I am not a fainting woman, and so only went into violent hysterics as soon as I was carried to my dressing-room. So much for that "pride" which you speak of as likely to prevent my shedding tears when encountering the kind acclamations of a multitude of my "fellow-creatures;" the most trying to the nerves of all demonstrations, except, perhaps, its howl of execration.

I came to this place to-day, and feel indescribably cheerless and lonely in my strange inn. The room at Manchester was the *home* of a fortnight, but this feels most disconsolately unfamiliar. Moreover, I only act here one night, Tuesday, and then go to Liverpool, where the master of the Adelphi Hotel, where I shall stay, is a person to whom I have been known for many years, in whose house I have been with my children, and where I shall feel less friendlessly forlorn than I do here.

I shall remain there about a week, and then go to Dublin, where I expect to stay about a fortnight, and where I shall find my youngest brother—a circumstance of infinite consolation and comfort to me. Passion week I spend at Sutton Park with the Arkwrights; after that go to Bath and Bristol, and then to London, where I have now an engagement for a month at the Princess's Theatre.

You have now the map of my proceedings for the next six weeks, after which I hope I shall see you in London. I direct this to Chesterfield Street, as you say you shall be back there on Thursday. I have been kept constantly supplied with the loveliest flowers all the time of my stay in Manchester, by one kind person or another, which has greatly helped to keep up my courage and spirits.

Pray give my respects to Lord Dacre.

I am ever, my dear Lady Dacre,

Yours truly,

FANNY.

Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, Thursday, March 4th, 1847.

MY DEAR HAL,

I do not go to Bath, but to Manchester, on the 25th and 27th, and perhaps on the Monday of Passion week; but this is not certain. If not on that Monday, then early in Easter week; and Passion week I shall spend with Mrs. Arkwright at Sutton.

On Thursday in Easter week, April 8th, I must be in London, as I act there for two nights gratuitously for your poor starving fellow-countrymen, for whom an amateur performance is being got up.

On April 15th I go down to Bath, and act there on the 17th, and my engagement at the Princess's Theatre does not begin till the 26th of that month. This is the plan of my campaign as far as it is laid out; should any change occur in it, I will let you know as soon as I know of it myself.

And so your plan for my taking the air, my dear, was to get into a *close* fly. I confess that would not

have occurred to my ingenuity, or I should think to that of any but an Irish humourist. I don't feel sure that there mayn't be a pun hidden somewhere in your proposition. *The damp*, indeed, I might have taken, to the greatest perfection, for there did stand a whole row of vehicles before my very windows at Manchester which were being saturated through and through with the rain that fell upon them all day long, and must have adapted them admirably for the purposes of a healthful drive for an invalid suffering from sore throat and a heavy cold.

I have nothing to say to your impertinent remarks on my zigzag progress to my various engagements, neither any observation to make about Emily's information upon the subject of my white cashmere gown.

I am perfectly persuaded that, as a considerable amount of food goes into one's stomach, the use of which is merely to produce necessary distension of all the organs, channels, receptacles, machinery, etc., in short; so a considerable amount of words proceeds out of our mouths, the use of which is merely to keep our lungs aired and our speaking organs in exercise; and for that purpose, the follies, and foibles, and even faults of our friends are excellent material, provided no bitterness mixes in the process; from which, as I feel myself very safe, between you and Emily, I abandon myself absolutely to you both; and as I believe scribbling (apparently unnecessary) is as necessary to the health of both of you as the apparently superfluous food and words which people swallow and utter, I am quite content you should fill up your paper

with the mad eccentricity of the order of my engagements, the rotation of my gowns, and the dripping street cabs in which I refuse to take the air for the benefit of my health. . . .

I do not know who the amateurs are who are to act for the starving Irish with me in London. Forster, the editor of the *Examiner*, I hear, is one; Henry Greville, who, indeed, is the getter up of the whole thing, another: but for the rest I do not know.

Your people are what are commonly called a generous people; and that, I suppose, is why they don't mind begging. I think it takes an immensity of generosity to beg.

Only think of Mr. Radley, here at the Adelphi, expressing his surprise, when he saw me, that you were not with me! Was not that really quite touching and nice of him?

My cousin, Charles Mason, is here. . . . His amiable temper and gentle manner made him a favourite with my poor mother, and I like to see him on that account. . . .

How sorry I shall be for both you and Dorothy when your pleasant time at Torquay is over! especially for you, who will have to see misery and sometimes hear nonsense. I mean when you go back to Ireland; not, *of course*, while you are with me. . . .

Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, Sunday, 7th.

I have minded what you said (as when didn't I?), and am swallowing ipecacuanha lozenges by the gross. It drives me almost crazy that you should be compelled to make your plans so dependent upon mine,

which are so dependent upon the uncertain wills and arrangements of so many people.

The manager of the Princess's Theatre, where I am engaged to act in London, will not allow me to act for the proposed charity at the St. James's Theatre. I offered to give up the engagement with him, rather than break my promise to the amateurs and disappoint all their plans; but he will not let me off my engagement to him, and will not permit me to appear anywhere else before that takes place. I think he is injuring himself by baulking a pet plan of amusement in which all manner of fine folks, lady patronesses, and the Queen herself, had been induced to interest themselves; and I think his preventing my acting for this charity will injure him much more than my appearance on this occasion, before my coming out at his theatre, could have done. But, of course, he must be the judge of his own interest; and, at any rate, having entered into an engagement with him, I cannot render myself liable to squabbles, and perhaps a lawsuit with him, about it. All these petty worries and annoyances torment and confuse me a good deal. I have a very poor brain for business, and there is something in the ignoble vulgarity and coarseness of manner that I occasionally encounter that increases my inaptitude by the sort of dismay and disgust with which it fills me. If the person who has hired me does not relent about these charity representations, I shall be obliged to give them up, and then I shall act in Manchester at that time, instead of on the 25th and 27th of March, which had been before intended, but which I now think I should give to two representations in Chester on my

way back from Dublin. All this, you see, is still in a state of most vexatious uncertainty, and I can give you no satisfaction about it, having been able to obtain none myself. . . .

Perhaps, dearest Hal, I ought not to have asked you the precise meaning of what you wrote about dear little H—— [her nephew, a charming child, who died in early boyhood], but, every now and then, those expressions which have become almost meaningless in the mouths of the great majority of those who use them, strike me very much when used by thinking people.

Unless death produces in us an immediate accession of goodness (which, I think, in those who have laboured faithfully to be good here, and are therefore prepared and ready for more goodness, it may), I cannot conceive that it should produce greater nearness to God.

Place, time, life, death, earth, Heaven, are divisions and distinctions that we make, like the imaginary lines we trace upon the surface of the globe. But goodness, surely, is nearness to God, and *only* goodness; and though I suppose those good servants of His who have striven to do His will while in this life are positively nearer to Him after death, I think it is because, in laying down the sins of infirmity that inevitably lodge in their mortal bodies, they really are thus much better after death.

I do not think this is the case with those who have not striven after excellence, which a young child can hardly be supposed to have done; because if there is one thing I believe in, it is that there is work to

do for every soul called into conscious existence. . . . If Dorothy were to die, I should believe she had gone nearer to God. His care and love for us is, I verily believe, the nearest of all things to us; but I think our *conscious* nearness to Him depends upon how we do His will—*i.e.* how we *strive* to do it.

I do not speak of Christ in this discussion, because, you know, I think it was God's will, but man's nature, that He came to show us, and to teach; and this part of the subject would involve me in more than I have space to write: but we will speak of this hereafter.

Is it not strange that Charles Greville and you should both be writing to me just now upon this same subject, of life after death.

I have been walking to-day and yesterday in the Botanical Garden here. . . . The place is full of the saddest and tenderest recollections to me; it is full, too, of innumerable witnesses of God's mercy and wisdom; plants and flowers from every climate, and the annual resurrection of the earth is already begun among them. I am very unwell to-day, but I was well yesterday, and this seems to be now the sort of life-tenure I may expect:—so be it.

God bless you, dear.

I am ever yours,
FANNY.

DEAR DOROTHY,

I send you a kiss, which Hal will give you for me.

Morrison's Hotel, Dublin, March 14th, 1847.

MY DEAR HAL,

I think you must have begun to think that I never meant to write to you again; for it is seldom that three unanswered letters of yours are allowed to accumulate in my writing-book; but since I left Liverpool, I have really not had leisure to write. . . .

The houses at Liverpool were crammed, but here last night there was a very indifferent one, partly, they say, owing to the fact that the Lord Lieutenant bespeaks the play for to-morrow night; but I should think it much more rational to account for it by the deplorable condition to which the famine has reduced the country, which ought to affect the minds of those whose bodies do not suffer, with something like a sympathetic seriousness, inimical to public diversions. . . .

I do not care to pursue the argument with you about the change produced by death in the existence of a child. That which you say about it appears to me to involve some absolute contradictions; but I would rather postpone the discussion till we meet.

Charles Greville began writing to me upon these subjects, with reference to the rapidly declining health and strength of his and my friend, Mary Berry; over whose approaching death he lamented greatly, although she is upwards of eighty years old, and, according to my notions, must be ready and willing to depart.

Charles Greville's ideas, as far as I can make them out, appear to me those of a materialist. His chief regret seems to be for the loss of a person he cared for, and the departure of a remarkable member of his

society. Beyond these two views of the subject he does not appear to me to go.

He has sent me, in the last letter I received from him, an extract from one of Sir James Mackintosh's, on the death of his wife, which he calls a "touching expression of grief," but which strikes me as rather a deplorable expression of grief, without other alleviation than the dim and doubtful surmise of a mind the philosophy of which had never accepted the consolations of revelation, and yet, under the pressure of sorrow, rejected the narrower and shallower ones of stoical materialism.

You wish to hear of my arrangement with my cousin, Charles Mason, and I will tell you when it is decided on. . . .

I have had a note from your sister, asking me to dine with them any day after the 16th, when they expect to come to town; but I have declined the invitation, because I do not wish to give up dining with my brother Henry, who comes to me every day when I don't act. . . .

It seems strange that you should ask me if uncertainty torments me? It torments me SO, that I never endure it, even when the only escape from it is by some conclusion that I know to be rash and ill-advised.

"The woman who deliberates," says the saying, "is lost." My loss has been, and ever will be, through precipitation, not deliberation. To choose anything, a gown even, is a martyrdom to me, and, unlike the generality of my sex, I generally go into a shop, wishing to look at nothing, and knowing only the precise

colour, material, and quantity of the stuff I mean to purchase; for if I were to leave myself the smallest discretion—option, we will say (I can hardly leave myself what I haven't got)—I should infallibly buy something revoltingly ugly, out of mere impatience of the investigation and deliberation necessary to get something that pleased me. It is to save myself from the trouble of choice that I have made so many arbitrary, and to your thinking, absurd rules about the details of my daily life; but they spare me indecision about trifles, and I find it, therefore, comfortable to follow them.

I am at Morrison's hotel; the rooms are clean, comfortable, and cheerful, but the fare is bad, and far from abundant; but if the charges are meagre in proportion, I shall be satisfied, if not with food, at least with equity.

My friend Arthur Malkin is here, as secretary to one of the members of the committee sent out from England to organize relief for your wretched countrymen. He is good and clever, and it is a great pleasure to me to have him here. I am sorry Mr. Labouchère [afterwards Lord Taunton] is away in Parliament. I wished particularly to have met him.

Lord Bessborough was at the play last night, and sent, after it was over, to invite me to the St. Patrick's ball on Wednesday; but I have declined, as I do not feel at all well enough for dissipations that would bore as well as tire me. I am told he means to ask me to dine at the Castle, which I rather dread, as it is not, I believe, allowable to refuse a representative of majesty; but I dread the exertion and the tedium of

the thing, and have a particular dislike to the notion of meeting —. . .

Good-bye, my dear.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

[Our total ignorance of the laws of health and the accidents of sickness throws us necessarily for help upon the partial knowledge of physicians; but I am often reminded of what that admirable physician and charming man, Dr. Gueneau ne Mussy, once said to me: "*Madame, nous ne sayons rien.*" "*Ah mais!*" remonstrated I, "*cependant quelque chose?*" "*Absolument rien, madame,*" was the consolatory reply of one of the first medical men of Europe, under whose care both I and my sister then were, and to whose skilful and devoted care I attribute the preservation of my sister's life under circumstances of great peril.

The amateur performance given at the St. James's Theatre was Lord Ellesmere's translation of Victor Hugo's "*Hernani*," which had been acted sixteen years before under such very different circumstances, as far as I was concerned, at Bridgewater House. Mr. C—— was again the hero, as I the heroine, of the piece, but the part of Don Carlos was filled by Henry Greville, and that of the old Spanish noble by Mr. John Forster.

It was upon this performance that Mr. Macready passed such annihilating condemnation, not even excepting from his damnatory sentence of total incapacity his friend and admirer, John Forster, whose mode of delivering the part of Don Ruez bore ludicrous

witness to Macready's own influence and example, if not direct teaching.

Macready does not even mention poor Forster; the entry in his diary runs thus: "Went to the amateur play at the St. James's Theatre; the play "*Hernani*," translated by Lord Ellesmere, was in truth an *amateur* performance. Greville and Craven were very good *amateurs*, but—tragedy by amateurs!"

The recital of a very graceful and touching poetical address, written by Lady Dufferin for the occasion, was part of the evening's work assigned to me, and as I was so weak and suffering from my late severe illness as to be hardly able to stand, it was with a sense of having certainly done my share in the evening's charity that I brought my part of the performance to a close.

While standing at the side-scene before going on to speak this address, dear Lord Carlisle brought me a most exquisite bunch of flowers, saying, "I know I ought to throw this at your head from the front of the house, but I would rather lay it at your feet here."

He then, to my great amazement, proceeded to spread out my satin train for me with a dexterity so remarkable that I asked him where he had served his apprenticeship? "Oh, at Court," said he, "at the drawing-rooms, where I have spread out and gathered up oceans of silk and satin, thousands of yards more than a counter gentleman at Swan and Edgar's." He certainly had learned his business very well.

After leaving Dublin I entered into an arrangement with my cousin, Charles Mason, to become my agent, and make my engagements for me, undertaking the necessary correspondence with the managers who

employed me, and looking after my money transactions with them for me. I stood greatly in need of some such assistance, being quite incompetent to the management of any business, and ignorant of all the usual modes of proceeding in theatrical affairs, to a degree that rendered it highly probable that my interests would suffer severely from my ignorance. My cousin, however, only rendered me this service for a very short time, as he left England for America soon after he undertook it; after which I reverted to my former condition of comparative helplessness, making my contracts with my employers as well as I could, and protecting myself from loss, and keeping out of troublesome complications and disputes, by the light of what natural reason and rectitude I possessed; always making my engagements by the night, and thus limiting any possible loss I might sustain or inflict upon my employers, to my salary and their receipts, for one performance. I also reduced my written transactions to the very fewest and briefest communications possible, with my various theatrical correspondents, and have more than once had occasion to observe that precision, conciseness, and a rigid adherence to mere statements of terms, times, and purely indispensable details of business, were not the distinguishing features of the letters of most of the men of business with whom I corresponded.]

Queen's Hotel, Birmingham, Saturday, May 29th.

MY DEAR HAL,

How did you get through that dreary time after we parted? I did so repent not having left some

of my "good angels," my flowers, with you; for though you do not care for them as I do, I love them so much that I think they would have seemed part of myself to you. What a vision remained to me of your lonely stay in that horrid room! But the day passed, and its sorrow, as they all do; and when this reaches you, you will be comfortable and rested, and among your own people again.

From Liverpool to Crewe I had companions in the ladies' carriage in which I was; after that, I had it to myself, and lay stretched on the ground for rest the whole of the rest of the way.

I finished Dr. Mays's memoir, and read through half Harriet Martineau's book, before I reached this place.

Women are always said to talk more than men, and yet I have generally observed that when English-women who are strangers to each other travel together, not a single word is exchanged between them; while men almost invariably fall into discourse together. This, I suppose, is partly from the want of subjects of general interest among women, such as politics, agriculture, national questions of importance, etc., which form excellent common ground of conversation for chance companions; while the questions of human society and considerations which concern men and women alike may be too important or too futile, too general or too special, to admit of easy discussion with strangers. The fact is, that most women's subjects of interest are so purely personal and individual that they can only be talked over with intimates.

I like Harriet Martineau's book very much, though

perhaps not quite so much as I expected. What pleases me best is its spirit, the Christian faith in good, which is really delightful; though I cannot help thinking she mistakes in supposing that one *must* be very ill before one believes in God's sole law, *good*, more almost than in one's own existence.

The descriptions of natural objects are admirable, and the human, loving kindness excellent; but I think she pushes her propositions sometimes to the verge of paradox. . . . I am delighted to have it, and think it better reading than the *Dublin Magazine*.

I got here at a little after three. The house is upside down with cleansing processes, by reason of which I am put (till a smaller one can be got ready for me) into an amazingly lofty large room, with some good prints hung on the walls, and a pianoforte; seeing which privileges, I have declined transferring myself to any other apartment, and shall be made to pay accordingly.

Tell me of your errand to the theatre at Liverpool, any how you spent the day, and how the sea treated you, any everything about everything.

God bless you, my dear.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Bristol, Sunday, May 30th, 1847.

A thousand thanks, dear friend, for Liebig's book. You are right, I want something more to read. I finished Harriet Martineau (Oh, what ink! wait till I get some better) yesterday evening before tea, and the pamphlet on bread after I got into bed, and the

“Liverpool Tragedy” (such a thing!) this morning in the railroad; so that your present of Liebig’s book came to my wish and to my need, just as a gift from you should do; and I shall spend this Sunday afternoon in learning those wonderful things, and praising God for them.

I regret very much that I cannot recollect anything distinctly that I read, because the consequence is that books of an order calculated to be of the greatest use to me, books of fact and positive scientific knowledge, are really of less advantage to me than any others, because of their making no appeal to what I should call my emotional memory, and so they only profit me for the moment in which I read them. Works of imagination, of criticism, of history, and biography (even of metaphysical speculation), leave more with me than treatises of positive knowledge or scientific facts. From the others, a spirit, an animus, a general impression, a mental, moral, or intellectual accretion, remains with me; indeed, that is pretty much the whole result I obtain from anything I read. But books of *knowledge*, of scientific or natural facts, though they sometimes affect me beyond the finest poetry with an awe and delight that brings tears to my eyes, have but one invariable result with me, to add to my love and wonder of God. Their other uses depend, of course, upon the memory which retains and applies them subsequently, either in action or observation; and this I fail to do, by reason of forgetting: and it is a sorrow and a loss to me, because the whole world is in some sort transfigured, and life endowed with double significance, to those who are

familiar with the details of the wonderful laws that govern them, and their self-communion must be as full of variety and interest as their conversation is to others.

I have infinite respect for knowledge; it is only second in value to wisdom, and to unite both is to be very *fortunate*—which word I use advisedly, for though the nobler of the two, wisdom is allowed to all, knowledge is not.

I agree with you in what you say of Harriet Martineau's book: the good in it is *her* peculiar good (very good good it is, too), but it must be taken with the shadow of her bad upon it. It seems to me occasionally a little hard and dogmatical, and I have not liked it, upon the whole, as much as I expected, for it is rather less Christian than I expected; yet it is a very valuable book, and I was very thankful for it.

I shall send the recipe for making effervescing bread forthwith to Lenox, to Catherine Sedgwick, who is a martyr to dyspepsia and bad baking, and who, being herself an expert cook, will know how to have the staff of life prepared from these directions, so as to support, instead of piercing her, as it mostly does, up among those country operators. They never have good bread there, and are all miserable in consequence, especially herself and her brother Charles, who have delicate stomachs and cannot endure the heavy sour concoction which they are nevertheless obliged to swallow by way of daily bread. (I almost wonder how they manage to say the Lord's Prayer petition for it.)

The note you forwarded me from Liverpool was another scream from that mad manageress about Macbeth. I wonder if her whole life is passed in

such agonies; I think it must be worse than the greatest bodily pain.

Only think, my dear, on arriving here, and inquiring for Hayes, I recollected that I had sent her to Bath and not to Bristol! "Consekens is," as Mr. Sam Weller says (but alas for you! you don't know Pickwick), that I have had to send off a porter from this house to Bath, per railway, to reclaim my erring maid, and fetch her hither; and, being Sunday, fewer trains go between the two places than usual, and she cannot get here till near four o'clock this afternoon, until which time I dare not trust myself to think of the state of mind of the abandoned (in the perfectly honest sense of the word) Bridget or Biddy Hayes; indeed, I shall not get her here till six this evening, and I only hope that I may then.

What a moon there was last night! and how it made me think of you, as it shone into the dark lofty room at Birmingham, where I sat playing and singing very sadly all by myself! The sea must have been as smooth as glass, and you cannot have been sick, even with your best endeavour.

The road from Birmingham here is quite pretty; the country in a most exquisite state of leaf and blossom; the crops look extremely well along this route; and the little cottage gardens, which delight my heart with their tidy cheerfulness, are so many nosegays of laburnum, honeysuckle, and lilac.

The stokers on all the engines that I saw or met this morning had adorned their huge iron dragons with great bunches of hawthorn and laburnum, which hung their poor blossoms close to the hissing hot

breath of the boilers, and looked wretched enough. But this dressing up the engines, as formerly the stage-coach horses used to be decked with bunches of flowers at their ears on Mayday, was touching.

I suppose the railroad men get fond of their particular engine, though they can't pat and stroke it, as sailors do of their ship. Speculate upon that form of human love. I take it there is nothing which, being the object of a man's occupation, may not be made also that of his affection, pride, and solicitude, too. Were we—people in general, I mean—*Christians*, forms of government would be matters of quite secondary importance, in fact, of mere expediency. A republic, such as the American, being the slightest possible form of government, seems to me the best adapted to an enlightened, civilized, *Christian* community, a community who deserve that name; and, you know, the theory of making people what they should be, is to treat them better than they deserve; an axiom that holds good in all moral questions, of which political government should be one.

This hotel is charming, clean, comfortable, cheerful, very nice.

Farewell. Give my kind regards to your people, and believe me

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Great Western Hotel, Bristol, Monday, May 31st.

MY DEAR HAL,

Go to Atkinson's and Co., 31, College Green, Dublin, and pay £8 13s. for my sister, and get a receipt

for it, and send it to me, and do this just as fast as ever you love me—that is, this very minute. I will repay you when we meet, or as much sooner as you may wish.

I have this morning received a note of eleven lines from Rome from Adelaide, without one single word of anything in it but a desire that I will immediately pay this debt for her; not a syllable about her husband, her children, herself, or any created thing, but Messrs. Atkinson and Co., and £8 13s. Therefore do what she bids me, and I ask you “right away,” as the Americans say, that I may send this afflicted soul her receipt, and bid her be at rest.

That they are still in Rome I know only by the address, which she does put, though not the date; as a compensation for which, however, she heads her letter with the sum she wishes me to pay, thus—

Rome, Trinità dei Monti.

£8 13s.

—a new way of dating a letter, it strikes me. She must have had poplin on the brain.

I wrote to you yesterday, my dear, and therefore have little to say to you. After all, I had directed my poor maid perfectly *write!* (look how I’ve spelt this, in the tumult of my feelings and confusion of my thoughts!), and she arrived, but not till three o’clock in the afternoon, paper in hand, with the direction I had myself written as large as life—“The Great Western Hotel, Bristol.” The fact is, that I had made so sure that she would be here before I was, that not finding her on my arrival, I made equally sure that I had misdirected her to Bath, and despatched

one of the hotel porters thither to hunt for her, which he did, sans intermission, for two hours, and on his return had the pleasure of finding her here. What a capital thing a clear head is, to be sure! At least, I imagine so. . . .

I have just come back from rehearsal at the theatre, where I found a letter from Emily, containing a bad account of her mother, and a most affectionate, cordial, illegible scrawl from poor dear old Mrs. Fitz-Hugh herself.

I also received a letter from Henry Greville, full of strictures upon my carriage and deportment on the stage, and earnestly entreating me to suffer his *coiffeur* ("a clean, tidy foreigner") to whitewash me after the approved French method, *i.e.*, to anoint my skin with cold cream, and then cover it with pearl powder; and this, not only my face, but my arms, neck, and shoulders. Don't you see me undergoing such a process, and submitting to such "manipulation"?

I have read more than half through Liebig, and, am always tempted to glance at the paragraphs *ahead* to see what wonders they contain. I have not yet consulted the last chapter for the "winding-up of the story." The marvels in the midst of which we exist are a "story without an end."

I find some of his details of "quantity" a little puzzling sometimes, but nothing else, and the book is delightful.

Charles Mason drank tea with me last night, and talked well, and with a good deal of information, about chemistry. He has read somewhat, and has some superficial knowledge of various subjects; moreover, is

a judge of physiognomy, for he said he never saw a countenance with a more beautiful expression of goodness than yours. Evidently, like Beatrice, he can "see a church by daylight." Isn't it a pity that he can no longer be my agent? Were you not struck with his great resemblance to your idol, John Kemble? My mother used to say he was more like his son than his nephew; and never having seen his uncle even, the curious collateral likeness showed itself in all sorts of queer tricks in his delivery and deportment on the stage, where, in spite of his resemblance to his celebrated kinsman, he is a most lamentable actor. Of course, being an educated man, he speaks with "good discretion;" of the "emphasis" the less said the better.

I go to Bath to-morrow morning, and remain there until Thursday, when I return here to act *Lady Macbeth* and then go back again to represent that same lady at Bath either Friday or Saturday.

Farewell, my dear. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Bath, Wednesday, June 2nd.

I have just had a long visit from Mr. C——, who is here, and who came to see me this morning with a young niece of his—a fair, sweet-looking girl of about eighteen, who, strangely enough, asked me a good many questions about my affairs. . . . At the end of their visit, I found that the young lady, while talking and listening to me, had torn up a visiting-card, and, with the fragments of it, put together on the table the outline of a tiny Calvary, the cross upon a heap of

rocks. I suppose she is a Catholic, like her uncle, and I wonder why so many religious people of all sorts and denominations take it for granted that others stand in need of "Hints to Religion." . . .

I was reminded (unnecessarily) of you at the theatre yesterday evening, when, immediately after the hateful stage-warning at my dressing-room door, of "Overture on, ma'am!" (the summons to the actors who are to begin a piece), I heard the orchestra break forth into your favourite strain of "Sad and fearful was the story." . . .

The instinctive horror of suffering of our poor human bodies is pitiful. What a sorry martyr I should have made! though I think I should not so much object to others inflicting pain upon me, as to inflicting it upon myself,—that seems to me such an absurd and disagreeable work of supererogation, I should never have been a self-body torturer for the salvation of my soul. . . .

You would have been amused yesterday evening if you had been at the theatre with me. The weather was so beautifully bright that I could not bear to shut the shutters and light the gas, so I dressed by the blessed light of heaven, and was sitting all rouged and arrayed for my part, working, with my back to the window, when a small mob of poor little ragged urchins, who had climbed over a railing that separated the theatre from a mean-looking street behind it, collected round it, and, clambering on each other's shoulders, clustered and hung like a swarm of begrimed bees at the window, which was near the ground, to enjoy the sight of me and my finery. Bridget, who

is kind-hearted and fond of children, turned the dresses that were hanging up right side out for the edification of the poor little ragamuffins, and their comments were exceedingly funny and touching. We could hear all that they said through the window—how they wondered if I put *them* beautiful dresses on one by one, or over each other; the rose in my hair, which you gave me, and the roses in my shoes, made them scream with delight; and if you could have heard the pathetic earnestness with which one of them exclaimed, “Oh, my! don’t you wish *them ere windies was cleaner!*” for the dirt-dimmed glass obstructed the full glory of the vision not a little. Poor little creatures! my heart ached with compassion for them and their hard conditions, while they hung and clung in ecstatic amazement at my frippery.

The house at Bristol the first night was wretched, my share of it only £14; here last night it was much better, but I do not yet know the proceeds of it. Charles Mason has latterly dropped a hint or two about intending shortly to go to America, so that I dare say he will be quite prepared to terminate his present arrangement with me.

In the railroad, coming from Bristol to Bath, I met Edward Romilly, a kind and pleasant acquaintance of mine. I had Liebig’s book in my hand, which he said was rather severe railroad reading, and proceeded to enlighten me as to the unsoundness of some of the author’s positions and deductions. Now, you know, Edward Romilly married Mrs. Marcet’s daughter, and, I take it for granted, in virtue of such a mother-in-law, is wise upon natural philosophy; but still, when one’s

ignorance is as huge and one's faith as implicit as mine,—when one's one endless, supreme question, about everything is Pilate's bewildered, "What is Truth?"—when from history, science, literature, art, nature, one receives every impression with the child's yearning query, "But is it true?" it makes one feel desperate and deplorable thus to have one teacher contradict and discredit another. After all, all knowledge by degrees turns to ignorance, as it were, by dint of more knowledge; and human progress, passing from stage to stage in its incessant onward flight, leaves deserted, from day to day and hour to hour, its temporary abiding-places. There is no rest for those who learn, and ignorance is a great deal more complete and perfect a thing, *here*, at any rate, than knowledge; with which paradox let me hug my ignorance, only regretting that I ever spoiled it by learning even so much as my alphabet.

In spite of Mrs. Marcet's son-in-law, I have finished Liebig, and now have only "Wilhelm Meister" to read, which is one of the most wonderful books that ever was written. I have read it often, and each time I do so I think it more wonderful than before. Do you remember poor Mignon's last song?—"Sorrow hath made me early old, make me again for ever young!" No wonder you love youth, my dear; in Heaven there are no old people.

The gardens in which this house stands are exquisite, and full of lovely children, who are a perpetual delight to me.

Good-bye, my dear.

Bath, Friday, June 4th.

DEAR HAL,

. . . I have just spent a delightful hour with three charming little creatures, children of the master of this hotel, for whom I have been buying toys, and who have been amusing themselves with them and allowing me a time of enchanting participation.

I drove this morning, because you told me to do so, through the piece of ground they call the park here. It is extremely pretty, and I never grow weary of admiring the orderly love of beauty of our people.

I have had another long visit from Mr. C—— this morning. . . . Certainly novelists invent nothing more improbable than life.

I had an explanation with Charles Mason yesterday afternoon, and he did not appear at all annoyed at my intention of discontinuing our present arrangement. I shall give up to him the entire receipts for one night, as else I am afraid he will hardly do more than cover his expenses. Then—the money that worthy man at Liverpool *borrowed* from me, which I shall assuredly never see again, and my travelling and living expenses deducted—my clear gains for this fortnight will be £68. It is not much, but all that much better than nothing. I shall be in town next week, and had intended, at the end of it, to go down to Bannisters; but Emily writes me that they cannot have me then, so I shall probably go to Plymouth, where they want me to act, and after that return to town again, and organize some more country engagements for myself; for I can't afford to be doing nothing. I go to town to-morrow morning, and shall be glad to be *at home*

again. I am writing with a vile iron pen, that has neither mind, soul, nor body.

God bless you, dear. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Royal Hotel, Plymouth, June 16th.

MY DEAR HAL,

Do not again put that sponge, saturated with that *stuff*, in your letters. The whiff of it I got accidentally in one I received some days ago was very pleasant, but the quantity you send me to-day is too much, and has given me a headache, and made me sick. Such virtue is there in proportion! Such immense difference in only *more or less*!

You bid me *lump* my answers to you, but I hate to do that. I cannot bear to defraud you in quantity, though inevitable necessity condemns me to the disparity of quality in our communications; but to give you poor measure in both, seems to me too bad. . . .

I shall act here on Friday, and leave for Exeter on Saturday, and I shall act there one or two nights, but I do not yet know precisely how often. I expect to be in London by the end of next week, and to remain there for a week, after which I shall probably go for some nights to Southampton, so that, in a sort of way, I shall see Emily, and she will see me; further than this I have not at present decided. I have yet to visit the Midland Counties, where I have had engagements offered me, and York, Sheffield, and Leeds; after which, I shall probably go on to Scotland. But all this is at present without fixed date.

Some time in the summer, I have promised to visit the C——s (Roman acquaintances of ours) at Brighton; and I shall stay some time in Scotland at a place called Carolside, with that very nice Mrs. Mitchell, with whom I am fast growing into a fast friendship. We shall be a strange company of widows at her house—herself, T—— M——, poor Emily De Viry, and poorer myself.

These are my floating plans for the summer. Of course you will hear into what specific arrangements they consolidate themselves by degrees.

All the theatres where I act—indeed, as far as I can see, all the theatres throughout the country—are Theatres Royal; and with very good reason, for they are certainly all equally patronized by royalty.

I forgot to tell you that before leaving London, I carried your bag, *i.e.* my worsted-work, to your nephew's lodging, beseeching him, in a civil note, to take charge of it for you. I have received a civil note from him in reply, professing his readiness to do so, but adding that he will not be in Dublin till the dissolution of Parliament, which will not take place till the middle of July; in reply to which, I wrote him another civil note, telling him I would apprise you of this, and then you could either leave the bag in his custody, till he went to Ardgillan, or inform him of any method by which you might choose to have it forwarded to you more immediately.

I am not satisfied with the way in which it is made up; my own work was thick and clumsy enough, and I think they have finished the bag with a view to matching, rather than counteracting, these defects in

the original composition. However, its value to you I know will be none the less for this; though, as I also know you are very *particular*, I wish it had been more neatly and lightly finished. I have put the strip of worsted-work you wished preserved, inside the bag, and would humbly advise you to cut it up for kettle-holders, for which purpose it appears to me infinitely better adapted than for the housewife you proposed to make of it. However, you know, I am shy about giving advice, so never mind what I say. . . .

The weather is cold, rainy, windy, in short, odiously tempestuous; in spite of which, I went into the sea yesterday, and shall do so every day while I am here; the freshness of the salt water is delicious.

Now, at this present moment, when I was about to close this letter, comes another from you, and I shall lump that in this answer; for 'tis absurd merely to wait till to-morrow that I may take up another sheet of paper to write to you upon, when in all human probability I shall have nothing new whatever to tell you.

I find that Charles Mason has made arrangements for me with the Exeter manager, and that I shall act there four nights, and therefore be there all next week, and only return to London next Saturday week. This was in contemplation when I came here, but had not been determined on until to-day.

I have had a very affectionate letter from Lady Dacre, asking me to go down to the Hoo and stay some time with them, which I will do between some of my coming engagements. . . . No, my dear Harriet, you cannot imagine, and I cannot say, how I shrink from demonstrating a great deal of the affection that I feel;

there are no words or sign adequate to it that I should not be reluctant to use, and I think this is at variance with the unhesitating and vehement expression of thought and opinion, and mere impression that is natural to me : but we are all more or less compounded of contradictions, and I *more* than *less*.

At the Exeter Station, coming down to this place, an obliging omnibus or coach-driver offered to carry me to Torquay if I was bound thither. Wouldn't it have been nice if I had said *Yes*, and you and Dorothy had still been there? but you weren't, so I said *No*. . . . Both the Grevilles are friends of ours. Henry has been very intimate with Adelaide for a long time. He has a great many good qualities, and though essentially a society man, has a good deal of principle ; he is not very clever, but bright and pleasant, and very amiable and charming. His brother Charles has better brains, and is altogether a cleverer person. He is a man of the world, and more selfishly worldly, I think, than Henry, whose standard of right is considerably the higher of the two ; indeed, Charles Greville's *right* always appears to me a mere synonym for *expedient*, and when I tell him so, he invariably says "they are the same thing," which I do not believe. He is, unfortunately, deaf, but excellent company in spite of that. I met him the day before I left London, at dinner at Lady Essex's, and he told me he and Lord de Maulay were going to start next week on a riding tour through England, beginning with Devonshire. I think it very probable that I shall see him in Exeter next week, as he is to be at the Duke of Bedford's in that neighbourhood. He talked eloquently of the beauty of the

scenery they were going through, and very seriously urged me to join their party, and ride over England with them, saying it would be a delightfully pleasant expedition—of which I have no doubt, or of the entire propriety of my joining it, and “cavalcading” through Great Britain in his and Lord de Maulay’s company.

Now I’ll tell you what I’ve done to-day—my holiday. In the first place it poured with rain all the morning, so I sent for a pair of battledores and a shuttlecock, and when Charles Mason came to render up last night’s account, I made him come into a beautiful large ball-room I had discovered in this house, and took a good breathing; and he, being like Hamlet, “fat and scant of breath,” took it hard.

New London Inn, Exeter, Monday, June 21st.

DEAR HAL,

Thanks for the purse, which I received this morning. I think you must imagine these country managers pay me as the monks did Correggio, in copper; perhaps, too, you have visions of me carrying my pay home on my back, as he did. (I forget whether that sad story is among the traditions exploded by modern *truth*.)

You have not received my last letter from Plymouth, or you would not have sent me again this tremendous “smell.” I beseech you, dear Hal, not to saturate your paper any more with Neroli, or whatever you call it; it gives me a headache, and turns me sick.

My present address is as above, and I shall remain here until Saturday morning, when I return to town.

I only like the leather purse because you have given

it to me, and though that makes me *love* it, it does not make me *like* it—my preference is for the pretty, coloured, delicately woven purses, through whose meshes the gold and silver smiles and glances, that you see me use, or abuse, as you think, and as their use is to be worn out, I am not much afflicted at their dropping into holes, and in due process of time fulfilling their destiny.

This inn is in the middle of the town, and an old, dingy, dull house; and I have an old, dingy, dark sitting-room, and the only trees I see are two fine *felled* elm trunks, which I have been industriously sketching.

The cathedral here is a grand old church, and I went yesterday afternoon to service there; but the choir was full, so I sat on a sort of pauper's wooden bench, just outside the choir, and under the beautiful porch that forms the entrance to it; and heard the chanting, but nothing else. I had Hayes with me, and she earnestly entreated me to sit with my feet upon hers, to protect myself from the cold stone pavement; was not that touching and nice of her? I am sure I ought to be grateful for such a comfort as she is to me. Poor thing! she has been in great trouble about her mother. When she was in Ireland she took a small sum of about ten pounds, which belonged to her mother, and placed it in the hands of an aunt of hers, in whom she had implicit trust, wishing to withdraw the money from the possible risk of its being got from her mother by her brother, who lives with her,—he being selfish and unprincipled and likely to take it, and her mother affectionate and self-denying and likely to give it to him. And now poor Hayes

gets word from her mother that her aunt says she can neither give her money nor money's worth, owing to the badness of the times; which of course troubles my poor maid very much, for she says her aunt is a woman of substance. However, she does not seem to think the money will ultimately be lost to her mother, but only inconveniently withheld for a time.

At Plymouth, I had a very kind and pressing invitation from Lady Elizabeth Bulteel—Lord Grey's daughter, whom I have known for some time—to go and stay at her pretty place, Flete, two miles from Plymouth; but having to come on here, I could not go to her, which I was very sorry for. She sent me the most exquisite flowers, which I brought away with me, and which are still consoling me here.

Good-bye; God bless you, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

New London Inn, Exeter, Wednesday, June 23rd.

I do not plead guilty to general inconsistency, but only to particular inconsistency, in a particular instance, dear Hal. . . . You are quite welcome to accuse me of it, however; but as in your last letter you imply that I accept the accusation, I beg leave to state distinctly that I do not. . . . Not, indeed that I make any pretensions to that order of coherency of action and opinion which is generally called consistency: my principles are few, simple, and comprehensive, and I rather desire so to embrace them with my heart, mind, and soul, that my conduct may habitually conform to them, thus am careful in every instance of action to

see whether I am observing them. Somebody said very well that principles were moral habits ; and our habits become unconscious and spontaneous : and so I think should our consistency be, and not a sort of moral rule or measure to be applied and adjusted to each exigency as it occurs, to produce a symmetrical moral appearance.

I think one reason why I appear, and perhaps am, inconsistent, is because I seldom have any consideration for *expediency*—what I should call *secondary* rules of conduct ; and I have not much objection to contradicting my course of action in the present hour by that of the next, provided at each time I am endeavouring to do what seems best to me. I desire a certain *frame of mind* that my conduct may flow habitually from it, without constant reference to outward coherency. In the course of life-long endeavour and practice, I suppose, this may be achieved. But do not think me presumptuous if I say that I think people are generally too afraid of appearing inconsistent, too desirous to seem reasonable,—in short, more anxious upon the whole about what they *do* than what they *are*. Of course, the one will much depend upon the other ; but they will *match* well enough without an everlasting comparison of shades of colour, if they are really in harmony, and, at all events, will certainly *harmonize* even if they do not precisely *match* : there's a woman's shopping illustration for you. . . . Of course you will understand well enough that I have not referred to the capital inconsistency of which poor St. Paul so pathetically complained—wishing to do right and doing wrong,—nor would you have charged

me individually and specially with this, alas, universal moral incoherency.

This is my holiday, and I have been spending it between two famous nursery gardens in the neighbourhood of Exeter, and the Cathedral.

These great gardeners send up their exquisite and precious plants to the London horticultural exhibitions, and I saw many for whose beauty and variety gold and silver medals had been awarded to their foster-father florists. The masters of both these establishments very courteously went over them with me, showing me the hot-houses where their choicest and rarest plants were kept; there were some, such exquisite and wonderful creatures, lovely to the eye, delicious to the smell—Patagonians, Javanese, from the Cordilleras, from Peru, from Chili, from Borneo,—the flower tribes of the whole earth.

Then, again, they showed me little pots of fine sand, covered with bell glasses, where the eye could hardly detect a point or shade of sickly green upon the surface,—the promise of some *unique* foreign flower, sent from its savage home in the forests of another hemisphere, to blossom at the Chiswick horticultural exhibition, and win medals for the careful cultivators, who have watched with faith—assuredly in this case “the evidence of things not seen,” its precarious growth and doubtful development.

One of these gentlemen horticulturists interested me extremely by his own fervent enthusiasm about his plants. He showed me two perishing-looking miserable dried-up *twigs*, and said, “Those are the only specimens of their kind in the kingdom. They come from Chili,

and when healthy bear a splendid blossom as large as a tulip. These are just between life and death : I fear we may kill them with kindness, we are so anxious about them." He told me they had a flower-hunter out in South America, and another in India. And now I must go to bed, because it is twelve o'clock.

I brought home some heavenly flowers from these earthly paradises, and then went and spent the rest of my afternoon in the Cathedral—a beautiful old building, of various dates and architecture, the whole effect of which is extremely picturesque and striking.

Good night, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

Orchard Street, Tuesday, August 24th.

Rachel has been acting at Manchester, to houses of *sixty* pounds (her nightly salary being *one hundred and twenty*), and this because Jenny Lind is going there. I must confess I have no patience with this—as if the rich Manchester merchants could not afford to treat themselves to both! Rachel is really pre-eminent in her art, and so this provokes me. . . . I dined with the Miss Berrys at Richmond on Wednesday, and met dear old Lady Charlotte Lindsay, who inquired as usual most affectionately after you. Mrs. Dawson Damer dined there, too, and said she remembered being as a very young girl at Wroxton Abbey (Lord Guildford's), and seeing you there a very young girl too.

I began this letter two days ago, and am in all the full wretchedness of packing up. I set off to-morrow

for Mrs. Mitchell's, where I hope to be on Thursday afternoon. I shall reach York to-morrow, at three o'clock, and intend sleeping there, of which I have written to apprise Dorothy, as I hope to see her for an hour or two in the evening.

I am obliged to give up my Norwich engagement, which I am very sorry for ; but the fast and loose style of the correspondence about it makes it impossible to fix any time for going there. The manager first asked me to go there in August, but now, because Jenny Lind is going there, he wants to put me off till the third week in September, at which time I expect to be in Glasgow, the manager of that theatre having written to me thence that October is not a good month there, and begged me to come in September. I am sorry to lose my Norwich engagement, but cannot help it. I have heard nothing more from the Princess's Theatre.

. . . My father talks of giving up his readings, and I have therefore spoken to Mitchell, of the St. James's Theatre, about giving some myself, and find him very willing to undertake the whole "speculation" and business, not only in London but all over the provinces, with me and for me ; so that I do not feel quite as uncomfortable about the uncertainty of an engagement at the Princess's as I might have done.

Mr. Mitchell is a Liberal, and an honest man, too, and I shall be quite safe in his hands ; in the mean time I shall be very glad to be at Carolside, instead of in London, though to-day and yesterday the weather has been very cold and chilly, and in Scotland is not likely to be warmer.

Do you hear of this horrid murder in Paris [that of the Duchesse de Praslin, by her husband] ? Ever so many people that I know here knew the unhappy woman and her still more wretched husband ; and the woman who has been accused of having instigated the crime was little Lady Melgund's governess for six years.

Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

[Mademoiselle de Luzzy, the governess of the Duc de Praslin's children, was acquitted upon his trial of any complicity in his crime ; that of which she was not acquitted, however, was, turning the hearts of her pupils against their unfortunate mother, and endeavouring to establish her position and authority in the duchess's home and family, at her expense. By a most strange turn of circumstance, Mademoiselle de Luzzy, thus connected with the great world of Paris, and implicated in one of its most tragic occurrences, went to the United States, where she married a country clergyman, whose family belonged to the peaceful population of Stockbridge—one of the loveliest villages in the "Happy Valley," of the Housatonic. The residence of the Sedgwick family in this charming place, attracted to it many foreigners of mark and distinction ; but few, certainly, whose claims to notoriety were so peculiar and painful as this lady's.

Mrs. Mitchell, of Carolside, was a Scotch woman of an Aberdeen family. She was my dear friend for many years, and a perfectly charming person. Her face was

exquisitely pretty and her figure faultless; she had very peculiar eyes of a lightish hazel, with such long lashes that it seemed occasionally as if her eyes were shining through a soft haze of golden brown rays. She spoke with a slight Scotch accent, the "winning Scottish speech" which Secretary Philips writes of as one of Mary Stuart's peculiar charms; and she was personally my notion of that "much blamed, much worshipped" modern Helen. She had remarkable decision of character and force of will, with the gentlest and most feminine appearance and manner; she was humorous and witty, and an incomparable mimic. She was a woman of admirable high principle and rectitude, and in every way as attractive as she was estimable. Her eldest son was proprietor of a charming place, Carolside, just over the Scottish border, and had hardly come of age and inherited it when the Crimean war broke out and compelled him, then a young officer in the army, to leave his pleasant home prospects and encounter the threatening aspect of "grim-visaged war." His mother, whose widowed life had been devoted to him and his younger brother, also a soldier, fluttered after her dear ones to the Crimea, and had the joy to get them safe back from the "world's great snare uncaught."

Lady M—— and Mrs. Mitchell were attached and almost inseparable friends for many years, occupying the same house in London, travelling on the Continent together, and when in Scotland living together at Mrs. Mitchell's pretty home, Carolside, or hiring some house in the Highlands together. Emily de Viry (afterwards, alas, Emily de Revel) I met again, for the first

time for many years, at Carolside. She was the daughter of our friends Mr. and Mrs. Basil Montague, and half-sister of my kind friend Mrs. Procter, and a very intimate friend of my sister Adelaide. She was an extremely interesting person, the tragic close of whose life can never be thought of without profound regret. She had married her cousin Count Charles de Viry, and after years of widowhood she married again the Count Adrien de Revel, Sardinian Ambassador in England, to whom she had not been united a week when they were both carried off by the cholera, which was then raging in Genoa: the same paper which announced their marriage brought the tidings of their untimely death to me. During this visit of mine to Carolside M. de Revel came there for a few days; I was well acquainted with him, and liked him very much.]

Carolside, Earlston, Sunday, 29th.

I am no more in London, my dear Hal, but in one of the sweetest places I ever was in, which, as you know, is a great delight to me.

I am only just beginning to recover from the effects of the journey hither, which, though divided into two days, made me very unwell. . . . Surely, you never meant, in spite of my invariable habit of replying to all your questions, that I should ever attempt an answer to that suggestion of your love and sorrow which, in speaking of your brother [Barry S—, dead many years before], makes you exclaim, "What now is his nature?" . . .

I have been sorrier to think of the death of Dr.

Combe than I was to hear of it, when, as is always the case with me, my first feeling was one almost of joy and congratulation. I never have any other emotion on first hearing of a good man's death. I have an instantaneous sense of relief, as it were, for such a one, of freer breathing, of expanded powers; of infirmity, pain, sorrow, trouble, fleshly hinderance, and earthly suffering for ever laid in the grave, and left behind; and that glorious creature, a noble human soul, soaring into a purer atmosphere proper to it, and promoted to such higher duties as may well be deemed rewards for duties well fulfilled on earth.

After a little while I began to cry, thinking of that sweet, beaming, intelligent, benevolent countenance, that I am never to see here again; but this was crying for myself, not him. I am truly grieved for his brother, and all who knew, and loved, and have lost so excellent a friend.

I have a paper in my possession still, which he laughingly drew up and gave me when I was a girl in Edinburgh, a sort of legal document, binding him to appear to me after he was dead; and one or two evenings, as I lay on my sofa alone in Orchard Street, I thought of this, and could not help fancying that if indeed it had been possible he could have appeared to me, the familiar trust and affection with which I always regarded him would have been paramount to all fears and wonders in the first moment of my seeing him.

I have heard nothing more of my engagement at the Princess's Theatre, and begin to think that perhaps I shall not hear anything more about it; but I scarcely

expected to do so before the end of November, because till then I should not be wanted there, and I dare say the manager will leave me as long a time as possible to consider of his offers and my acceptance or rejection of them.

I am charmed with my hostess. She is exceedingly pretty—a great virtue, as you know, in my estimation; she is upright, true, pious, and uncommonly reasonable and judicious: am I not right to be charmed with her? Then, too, she is most kind, gentle, considerate, and affectionate to me, and esteems me, as I believe I have before told you, far beyond my deserts—who can resist *that* bribe?

Upon several points upon which I differ from people's usual modes of thinking and feeling, I find there is a great similarity in our views; and I feel as if I might thank God for an addition to the treasure of excellent people's love that He has comforted my life withal; and to count another friend added to those who have been such infinite blessings to me.

I am left to conclude that Mrs. Grote was so absorbed in her interest in Mademoiselle Jenny Lind, that I vanished utterly from her mind; for after coming to see me just before I went down to Bannisters and pressing me to go to the Beeches when I returned, I never heard another word about it, or even set eyes upon her again.

I have been with your precious Dorothy, who came, both to my joy and sorrow, to meet me at the railroad station, with her poor face covered with that hideous respirator, and speaking when she had it off as if she still had it on, her voice was so pale and dim. It

grieved me that she should have made an exertion that I feared might injure her, and yet I was delighted to see her and most grateful for her extreme kindness in thus troubling herself. She came too, with her hands full of flowers (my "good angels" brought to me by your "good angel," which seemed to me pretty and proper, was it not?), and carried me straight off to Fulford [Miss Wilson's home near York], where, in spite of much pain and exhaustion consequent upon the long railroad journey, I passed a blessed few hours with her, though our talk inevitably was of much sorrow. . . .

I have not had time yet, to see anything of the condition of the people about this place. The villages and cottages we passed coming hither all struck me as poor and comfortless compared with England; but the less cleanly and tidy habits of the Scotch, and their almost universal practice of going barefoot—at least the women and children,—give an impression of greater poverty and discomfort than really exist, I believe.

I have not yet received my American letters. . . . I am to act three nights at Glasgow. I think Kelso is the town nearest Carolside, and that is fourteen miles distant; the post town or village is Earlstoun (Ercildown) a mile from the house. The whole region belongs to poetry and legend and romance. The Eildon hills overlook it, and Thomas the Rhymer haunts it, and the Scotch ballads are full of it. Do you know—oh no, you know no songs, you unfortunate!—"Leader haughs and Yarrow," or that exquisite melody beloved of Mendelssohn:—

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny bonny bride!
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome *marrow*!"

(isn't that an odd term of endearment to one's mistress ?)

“Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny bonny bride!
And think nae mair on the braes of Yarrow”?

Then there is that lovely ditty “Gala water,” which I always sing in honour of my young host, who is a sort of Laird of Galashiel. The whole place is full of such charming suggestions and associations. The Leader, a lovely, clear, rapid, shallow, sparkling, trout stream, makes a sudden bend across the lawn, opposite the drawing-room and dining-room windows here (last October the pixie got vexed at something and very nearly rushed in to the house); and early before breakfast this morning I walked along the banks of the stream, and then knee deep up its bright waters, and then over the breezy hills, “O'er the hills, amang the heather,” whence I watched its gleaming course between red-coloured rocks, like walls of porphyry or Roman tufa, and through corn-fields, and by tufted woods, and felt for an hour as if there was no bitterness in life. . . .

I shall remain here till September 11th, when I go to Glasgow, where I expect to act on the 13th. I shall be very sorry to go away, but shall certainly by that time have had enjoyment enough to feel that it would be unwise to tempt the inevitable decree which makes all pleasure and happiness short-lived here, and which, when we strive to retain or detain them, makes us wise through some disappointment or disenchantment, which it is still wiser to anticipate and avoid.

Farewell, dear Hal.

I am ever as ever yours,
FANNY.

[Carolside was situated just beyond the Border in Scotland, in that region of romantic and poetical traditions, full of the charm of early legendary and ballad lore, of the associations of Burn's songs and Scott's Border minstrelsy, pervaded with the old superstitions, half-beliefs, dating from as far back as the days of Thomas the Rhymer, and the later powerful influence of the Wizard of the North, the mighty master-magician of our own day.

Melrose, Dryburgh, and Abbotsford, Smailholme, and Beamerside, were all within easy distance of it; "the bonnie broom of Cowdenknowes" bloomed in its neighbourhood; the Gala, the Leader, the Tweed, the Yarrow, ran singing through the lovely region, the exquisite melodies that have been inspired by their wild scenery. It was a region of natural beauty, heightened by every association that could add to its charm. The Eildon Hills were our landmarks in all our walks, and rides, and drives: and Ercildown, modernized into Earlston, the picturesque post-village at our gates.]

Carolside, Earlston, September 5th.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

. . . Of the advantageous engagement which you heard I had concluded, I cannot speak with any certainty, for it never was settled definitively, and I begin to think will not be concluded. I think it may have been nothing more than a feint on the part of the manager of the Princess's Theatre, who has been urged by Mr. Macready's friends to engage me to act with him, and who, as he will not give me my terms, has, I think, perhaps merely tendered me an engagement

that he knew I would not accept, in order to be able to say that he had *endeavoured* to make an arrangement with me. I am very sorry for this, for employment during the winter months in London was what I much desired. However, "there is a soul of good even in things evil," and the later experiences of my life have left me little sensibility to spend upon crosses of this description.

Not to be able to work for my own maintenance would indeed be a serious calamity to me; but if I fail of a theatrical engagement I shall fall back upon my original plan, to me so far preferable, of giving readings. I do not think that now, after a whole year of apparent relinquishment of that pursuit, my father has any thought of resuming it, which leaves me free to make the attempt.

I am staying with a friend at a place on the Scottish Border; the Leader, famous in song, runs across the lawn; we are four miles from Melrose, and about as many from Abbotsford; the country is lovely, and full of poetical and romantic associations.

I remain here another week, and then go to Glasgow, where I am to act; after that, I expect to pass three weeks in Edinburgh, between my two cousins, Cecilia Combe (whom you remember as Cecy Siddons) and a daughter of my dear friend, Mrs. Harry Siddons, who married Major Mair, and is living happily and prosperously in beautiful Edinburgh.

I must either act or give readings during this time, as I can in no wise afford to be idle.

It was a great disappointment to me to *boil* by B——'s very door on my way here [Miss Barbarina

Sullivan, Lady Dacre's granddaughter, now the Hon. Lady Grey], but my plans had been all disarranged and confused by other people, and I was most unwillingly compelled to pass by Howick. I have written to offer myself to her in the last week of October on my way back to London, and heartily hope she may be able and willing to receive me, as I long to see her in her new home.

Pray give my kind regards to Mrs. Brand. You ought to be of the greatest use, comfort, and pleasure to each other, endowed, as you both are, with the especial graces of age and youth.

With affectionate respects to Lord Dacre, believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Miss Susan Cavendish had married the Hon. Thomas Brand, Lord Dacre's nephew and heir. When I wrote this letter young Mr. and Mrs. Brand lived a good deal at the Hoo with my kind old friends.]

Carolside, Earlstoun, September 5th.

You ask me what I am doing, dear Hal. I am driving fifteen miles in an open britzska, in a bitter blowing day, to return morning calls of neighbours, whose laudable desire is to "keep the county lively," and who have dragged my little hostess into active participation in a picnic at Abbotsford, which is to take place next Friday, the weather promising to reward the seekers after "liveliness" with their death of cold, if they escape their death of dulness.

I have taken several charming rides; the country

is beautiful. I have caught a tolerably good cold—I mean, good of its kind—by wading knee-deep in the Leader, and then standing on cold rocks, fishing by the hour; in which process I did catch—cold, but nothing else; for, though the water is still drowning deep in some beautiful brown pools, set in the rocks like huge cairngorms, it is, for the most part, so shallow, and everywhere so clear with the long continued drought, that the spotted trout and silver eels see me quite as well as I see them, and behave accordingly, avoiding me more successfully, but quite as zealously, as I seek them. . . .

Our party has hitherto consisted of Emily de Viry, an uncle and brother of Mrs. Mitchell's, and a London banker, a friend of hers. This, with the "liveliness" of the neighbourhood, with whom we have dined, and who have dined with us, has been our society.

Next week Lady M——, who has been on a visit at Dunse Castle, returns; and various people are coming from sundry places; but, except the Comte de Revel, I do not know any of those who are expected.

The only music I have is my own *forbye*, a comic song or two, gasped and death-rattled out by poor old Sir Adam Fergusson, whom I met seventeen years ago at Walter Scott's house, and who is still tottering on, with inexhaustible spirits, but a body that seems quite threadbare, tattered, and ready to fall in pieces with long and hard use.

I do not read to the party collectively but occasionally to Emily de Viry alone, who has asked me once or twice to read her favourite poems of hers, of Wordsworth's, Tennyson's, and Milnes's. . . .

I act in Glasgow on Monday, to-morrow week. On Sunday I shall be in Edinburgh, and shall go and see Cecilia and Mr. Combe. I am sorry you didn't see Mrs. Mitchell, for, though forty years old, she might be fallen in love with any day for her good looks only. She is my notion of what Mary Stuart must have looked like, but she is a marvellous wise and discreet body—mentally and morally, I should think, very unlike the bonnie Queen of Scots.

Did I tell you that one place where we dined was Cowdenknowes? and I felt like singing "The Bonnie Broom" all the time, which would have been an awful accompaniment to the gastronomic enjoyments of the "liveliness of the county." Good-bye, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Glasgow, Wednesday, September 15th.

I do not know what my friend's religious opinions are. She was brought up in the midst of strict Presbyterians, but I suspect, from some things I have heard her say, that she is by no means an orthodox sample of that faith. But, you know, I am never curious about people's beliefs, nor anxious that my friends should think as I do upon any subject. The resemblance between Mrs. Mitchell's notions and mine was one that she was led to express quite accidentally on a matter on which few women would agree with me. . . .

I have not heard from Adelaide for a long time—a month at least. The Comte de Revel, the Sardinian ambassador, was at Carolside while I was there, and

spoke of the condition of the whole of Italy as full of insecurity, and liable at any moment to sudden outbreaks of violent and momentous change.

I cannot think that Rome will be a desirable residence for foreigners this winter; but E—— is so indolent that, unless people are massacred in the streets, and, moreover, in the identical street in which he lives, I should much doubt his being willing to move, or thinking it at all necessary to do so. I saw the old Countess Grey and Lady G—— just before they left London about three weeks ago. They were intending to winter in Rome, and told me they were much dissuaded by their friends from doing so.

If you leave Ireland, as you say, on the 1st of October, I am afraid I shall not see you in London, for I expect to pass the whole of that month in Edinburgh; but I hope I shall find leisure to come to St. Leonard's, and see you and Dorothy while you are there.

My plans are at present a little unsettled. I think of going back to Carolside with Mrs. Mitchell and Lady M—— until next Monday, when I shall return to Edinburgh, and from thence proceed to act four nights at Dundee; after that I shall be stationary in Edinburgh for, I hope, at least three weeks. I think I shall not act there, but have some thoughts of giving readings. . . . Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever as ever yours,
FANNY.

Dundee, Thursday, 2nd.

MY DEAR HAL,

Your letter directed to me to Greenock never reached me. I did not go there; and having left

Glasgow without doing so, shall not visit that place at all now.

I arrived yesterday in Dundee, having left Edinburgh in the morning. I act here two nights, and two in Perth, and return to Edinburgh on Wednesday week to remain with Elizabeth Mair (youngest daughter of Mrs. Harry Siddons) till the last week in October. After that I go southward to visit B—— G—— at Hawick, and the Ellesmeres at Worsley.

Your letter about sleeping in Orchard Street, on your way through London, is so very undecided—I mean upon that particular point—that I shall write to Mrs. Mulliner (my housekeeper) to desire her to receive you, if you should apply for a lodging, so that you can do as you like—either go there or to Euston Square.

I am delighted at the prospect of my three weeks' stay in Edinburgh. Nothing could exceed the affectionate kindness with which Lizzy and her husband received me.

After all that I have seen at home and abroad, Edinburgh still seems to me the most beautiful city I ever saw, and all my associations with it (except those of my last stay there) are peaceful and happy, and carry me back to that year of my life spent with Mrs. Harry Siddons, which has been the happiest of my existence hitherto. . . . Elizabeth's children are like a troop of angels, one prettier than another; I never saw more lovely little creatures. The companionship of children is charming to me. I delight in them, and am happy to think that I shall live among Lizzie's angels for three weeks. I was living with

children at Carolside. Emily de Viry had her little boy and girl with her, the latter a little blossom of only a year old, born, poor thing! after her father's death. Mrs. Mitchell's eldest son was at home from Eton for the holidays, a very fine lad of sixteen, devoted to his mother, who seems to me only to exist through and for him and his brother. . . . I am to act while I am in Edinburgh, which, of course, is a good thing for me.

E—— has written to Henry Greville to take the house in Eaton Place, which they looked at together when he was in London, so I feel sure they will be home in the spring. Adelaide has written a letter to Henry Greville, which he has sent on to me, assuring him of that fact. . . . She is enchanted at the idea of coming home. Good-bye, my dear. I will write this minute to Mrs. Mulliner to put you in my room, if you go to Orchard Street.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Perth, Monday, September 27th.

MY DEAR HAL,

I do not understand your note of the 15th, which has only just reached me here on the 27th. You ask me if I "have not written to Lizzie Mair to ascertain her whereabouts." Lizzie is in Edinburgh. I spent the Monday and Tuesday of last week with her, and return there the day after to-morrow, after acting two nights in this lovely place, whither I came on from Dundee yesterday. I shall remain three weeks with Lizzie, and shall see Cecilia and

Mr. Combe during some part of that time; for, though they did not return to Edinburgh, as I supposed they would on Dr. Combe's death, they are expected home daily now, and will certainly be there in the first days of October. I wrote from Dundee to Mulliner, to make up my bed and do everything in the world for you that you required; and I wrote to you from Dundee, telling you that I had done so. I have now again this minute written to the worthy woman, reiterating my orders to that effect; so sincerely hope you will be properly attended to in my house. Jeffreys, I am sorry to say (sorry for my sake, glad for his), has found an opportunity of placing himself permanently with a gentleman with whom he lived formerly, and has written to tell me of this; so that you will not have his services while you are in Orchard Street. He was an excellent, quiet, orderly servant, and I am sorry I shall not have the advantage of his service during the remainder of my time here.

I am engaged to act with Mr. Murray in Edinburgh for ten nights, from the 16th to the 25th of October. Before that I shall return for three nights to Glasgow, where my last three nights were very profitable, and the manager wishes to have me again. This will probably be next week, the 5th, 6th, and 7th of October. Perhaps I may go for a night or two to Greenock from Glasgow before I return to Edinburgh, but this is uncertain.

From the 12th to the 15th I am going with Mrs. Mitchell, who will take me up in Edinburgh to visit the H—— D——s at Ardoch, and after that shall be stationary for ten days.

Perth, Tuesday 28th.

In spite of my innate English horror of untidiness, and my maid's innate Irish tendency to it, I should be very sorry if she were to leave me. She has lived with me many years, and I really love, as well as esteem her. She has been more than a servant—she has been a friend to me; and I cried some tears at Carolside at the thought of parting with her. . . .

I will tell you another point of agreement between Mrs. Mitchell and myself, which I also discovered accidentally. Emily de Viry was laughing at her for a peculiar mode of dress she has adopted, always wearing a cap upon her pretty head, and never uncovering her arms and neck, though both are beautiful, in evening dress. I was appealed to for my opinion about the costume of middle-aged gentlewomen, and could, of course, only state that it had been my own determination for some years past never to uncover either my arms or neck, or wear any but sober colours as soon as I was forty years old. This is one of those trivial points of agreement which sometimes indicate more resemblance between people's natures than a similarity of opinions on important matters, which may co-exist with considerable difference in matters of taste and feeling. Mrs. Mitchell, like myself, does not think that stark nakedness would be indecent among decent savage people, but does object to full-dress semi-nudity among indecent civilized ones.

Lady M—— did not come with me to Dundee. I would not let her, though her proposal to do so was

certainly dictated partly by her affection for me. . . . But I would not let her come with me *strolling*, though I should only have been too glad of her company. She paints beautifully. . . . Alas! an empty heart is a spur and goad to drive one to the world's end, unless the soul be full of God, and the mind and time of wholesome occupation.

The Mairs are excellently kind to me, and I look forward to my stay with them with great pleasure. Cecilia and Mr. Combe are expected daily in Edinburgh, so I shall lose little or nothing of them.

I am just disappointed of a charming opportunity of seeing the lovely country round Perth. Lady Ruthven has sent me a very pressing invitation to spend some days at Freeland, seven miles from here; but I am obliged to return to Edinburgh to-morrow, for which I am very sorry, as I should have liked to go to Freeland, the whole neighbourhood of which is beautiful. Good-bye. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

29, *Abercrombie Place, Edinburgh, Saturday, October 2nd.*

DEAR HAL,

I received a note from Mrs. Mulliner yesterday morning, expressing her readiness to receive you, and her full intention to devote herself to you to the very utmost of her ability. I am sorry Jeffreys will not be there to help you in getting cabs, etc.; but he has found a chance of placing himself permanently with a former master, and, of course, is glad of the opportunity to do so.

I have not yet seen any of the Coxes. Cecilia and Mr. Combe only arrived last night from Hull, having come by Antwerp. They have both got the influenza, and are very much knocked up, and I have seen neither of them yet. . . .

The railroad running through the Castle Gardens has cruelly spoiled them, of course, though from the depth of the ravine, at the bottom of which it lies, it is not seen from Prince's Street; but its silver wake floats up above the highest trees of the banks, and the Gardens themselves are ruined by it. I have a sadly affectionate feeling for every inch of that ground. . . . I do not admire Scott's monument very much. It is an exact copy in stone of the Episcopal Throne in Exeter Cathedral, a beautiful piece of wood carving. The difference between the white colour of the statue and the grey shrine by which it is canopied is not agreeable to me. I should have liked it better if the figure had been of the same stone as the monument, and so of the same colour.

In Edinburgh it is never so much the detail of its various parts that arrests my attention and enchants me especially, as the picturesque and grand effect of its several parts in juxtaposition with each other—the beautiful result of all its features together, the striking and romantic whole. The Carlton Hill seems to me more covered with buildings than I thought it was; but I believe you have seen it since I have, so that I do not know how to answer your question about it.

In determining to act in Edinburgh I followed the advice of the Mairs, who were, of course, more likely to

be able to judge of the probable relative success of reading or acting here, and who counselled the latter. . . . Good-bye, dear.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

[My cousin Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Mrs. Harry Siddons, married Major Mair, son of that fine old officer, Colonel Mair, Governor of Fort George. During several protracted seasons of foreign service, one of the banishments to which his military duty condemned Arthur Mair was a remote and lonely outpost on the furthest border of our then hardly peopled Canadian territory—a literal wilderness, without human inhabitants. Here, alone, with the small body of men under his command, he led a life of absolute mental and intellectual solitude, the effect of which upon his nervous system was such that, on his return to civilized existence, the society of his fellow-creatures, and all the intercourse of busy city life, affected him with such extreme shyness and embarrassment that in his own native town of Edinburgh, for some time after his return to it, he used to avoid all the more frequented thoroughfares, from mere nervous dread of encountering and being spoken to by persons of his acquaintance—an unfavourable result of “solitary confinement,” even in a cell as wide as a wilderness.]

Star Hotel, Glasgow, George Square, October 4th.

DEAR HARRIET,

My acquaintance with the H—— D——s dates only from my last visit to Glasgow, when they joined our party at this hotel, and returned to Carol-

side with us. The lady is a daughter of a family who are intimate friends of T—— M——, and was presented to me when a girl in London some years ago. She has since married, and I met her again, with her husband, here a little while ago. . . . They both show a very kind desire to be civil and amiable to me, and I like them both, and her especially. They have spent the last five years of their lives wandering together about Europe and Asia. They have no children, and have travelled without any of the servants that generally attend wealthy English people abroad (courier, lady's-maid, valet); and have come home so in love with their wild untrammelled life, that the possession of their estate at Ardoch, and their prospect of an income of many thousands a year, seem equally to oppress them as undesirable incumbrances, requiring them to sacrifice all their freedom, and submit to all sorts of civilized conventional constraints from which they have lived in blessed exemption abroad, and to adopt a style of existence utterly repugnant to their nomadic, *no-habits*. G—— D——, on their return to Ardoch, proposed to his wife to take up their abode in two of the rooms of their fine large house, and let the rest to some pleasant and amusing people; for, he said, they never could think of living in that house by themselves. . . .

Your distress about my readings I answered with a slight feeling that it was a pity you should begin to be anxious and troubled about the details of a project that may possibly never be carried out after any fashion. I paid heed, nevertheless, to your observations, of which I admit the force, and am so far from

having determined to abide by any theoretical convictions of my own upon the subject that I shall be guided entirely by Mr. Mitchell's opinion about the best manner of giving my readings; for, as I do it for money, I shall do it in the way most likely to be profitable. At the same time, I shall certainly use my best endeavour to have the business so arranged as to desecrate as little as possible the great works of the master, in the exposition and illustration of which I look for infinite pleasure and profit of the highest order, whatever my meaner gain by it may be. . . .

[I am afraid my excellent and zealous manager, Mr. Mitchell, was often far from satisfied with the views I took of the duty imposed upon me by reading Shakespeare. My entire unwillingness to exhaust myself and make my work laborious instead of pleasant to me, by reading more than three, or at the utmost four, times a week, when very often we could have commanded very full rooms for the six; my pertinacious determination to read as many of the plays (and I read twenty-five) as could be so given to an audience in regular rotation, so as to avoid becoming hackneyed in my feeling or delivery of them, appeared to him vexatious particularities highly inimical to my own best interests, which he thought would have been better served by reading "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and the "Merchant of Venice," three times as often as I did, and "Richard II.," "Measure for Measure," and one or two others, three times as seldom, or not at all. But though Mr. Mitchell could calculate the money value of my readings to me, their inestimable value he knew nothing of.]

Pray now, my dearest friend, consider that you too often challenge with affectionate anxiety for me that future which I may never live to see; and yet do not imagine that I consider your apprehensions and suggestions, were they a thousand times more numerous and more ridiculous, if that were possible, as in any way unsatisfactory; but highly the contrary, as testifying to that most comfortable fact that you, my beloved Hal, are the very same you ever have been to me, an excellent, precious, devoted, wise, most absurd, and every way invaluable friend. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Greenock, October 9th.

I am very glad I did the duty of a hostess, dear Hal, though only in your dreams, and received you hospitably in my own house, though I was not conscious of it. As for that fool Mulliner and that brute Jeffreys, I will hang them up together on one rope when I return, for allowing you to be so horribly disturbed. . . .

If we are in Orchard Street together again, you shall put the Psyche [a fine cast of the Neapolitan truncated statue given to Mr. Hamilton, Mrs. Fitz-Hugh's brother, by the King of Naples] in whatever light you please; but, as I am certain not to return to London till the third week in November, if then, I feel as if, when I get back to Orchard Street, I should have nothing to do but pack up my things preparatory to removing to King Street, where I hope to

get Mrs. Humphreys to receive me until I leave England.

I shall certainly not be six weeks in Orchard Street when I return, and the Psyche will desert the drawing-room when I do, and resume her post on the staircase, where she always seemed to me to look down on dear Mrs. Fitz-Hugh's morning visitors, as they came up the stairs, with a divinely mild severity of expression, as if she felt the bore about to be inflicted by their presence on the inmates of her house, the mortals under her heavenly care.

You ought to find two letters from me at Bannisters, for I have directed two to you there. How I wish I could be with you and dear Emily! Give my love to her, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[I was at this time occupying my friend, Mrs. Fitz-Hugh's, house in Orchard Street, Portman Square, which I rented for a twelvemonth from her. It was a convenient small house in an excellent situation, and one whole side of the drawing-room was covered with a clever painting, by Mr. Fitz-Hugh, of the bay and city of Naples—a pleasant object of contemplation in London winter days.]

Glasgow, October 12th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I should very much wish that you would give me one of Loyal's children [a fine Irish retriever of my friend's]; but do not again end any letter to me so abruptly, without even signing your name, because

it gives me a most uncomfortable notion that I have not got all you have written, that you have, by mistake, put only a part of your letter in your envelope, and so sent it off unfinished to me.

I left Carolside, to my great regret, yesterday. I came in Mrs. Mitchell's carriage to within fourteen miles of Edinburgh, where I joined the railroad. She accompanied me thus far, and then returned home. At Edinburgh I transferred myself immediately to the Glasgow train, and so came on, without being able to ascertain whether Cecilia Combe and Lizzie Mair are at home or not.

Mrs. Mitchell and Lady M——, and a party of their friends, are coming to Glasgow to-morrow. They will stay at the same inn where I am, and go to the theatre every night that I play, so that I do not feel yet as if I had taken leave of them; and Lady M—— intends going on with me to Dundee, where I am going to act when I have finished my engagement here and at Greenock.

Is it not too provoking that the York manager has at length found out that he can afford to give me my terms, and now writes to me to beg that I will go and act in York at the beginning of next month? which, of course, I cannot, as I am to be three weeks in Edinburgh before I return to England.

Neither you nor Dorothy mention your winter plans. Have you none made yet? . . .

I do not think, dear Hal, that you have ever heard me express a positive rejection of phrenology, for the simple reason that, never having taken the pains thoroughly to study it, it would ill become me to do

so. At the same time, you know, I have at various times lived much in the society of the principal professors of the science in this country, and they have occasionally taken pains to explain a good deal of their system to me. I have also read a good many of their books, and have had a great personal affection and esteem both for Mr. Combe and his excellent brother. But, in spite of all this, and my entire agreement with almost all their physiological doctrines, phrenology, as I have hitherto seen and heard it, has a positive element of inconclusiveness to me, and I doubt if by studying it I should arrive at any other opinion, since all the opportunities I have enjoyed of hearing it discussed and seeing it acted upon have left my mind in this frame regarding it. I believe myself to have no prejudice on this subject, for I have longed all my life to know something positive and certain about this wonderful machine which we carry about with us, or which carries us about with it, and incline to agree with the views which the phrenological physiologists entertain on the subjects of temperament and general organization. But, in spite of all this, phrenology, as I hear it perpetually referred to and mixed up by them with their habitual speech (it forms indeed so completely the staple of their phraseology that one had need be familiar with the terms to follow their usual conversation), produces no conviction on my mind beyond the recognized fact that a nobly and beautifully proportioned head indicates certain qualities in the human individual, and *vice versa*.

It appears to me merely a new nomenclature for long known and admitted phenomena; and beyond

those, they seem to me to involve themselves in contradictions, divisions, and subdivisions of the brain, so minute and various, and requiring so much allowance for so many conditions, as considerably to neutralize each other, and render the result of their observations, which to them seems positive and conclusive, to me uncertain and unsatisfactory.

There are many things which my intellectual laziness prevents my examining, which I feel sure, if I did examine, would produce positive results on my mind; but phrenology does not seem to me one of these. If it had been, I should have adopted it, or felt the same sort of belief in it that I do in mesmerism, about which, understanding nothing, I still cannot resist an impression that it is a real and powerful physical agency. . . . Now you must draw your own conclusions as to the causes of this state of mind of mine with regard to phrenology. The phrenologists, you know, say I am deficient in "causality"—and undoubtedly it is not my predominant mental quality; but I incline to think that I *could* think, as well as the average number of professing phrenologists, if I would take the trouble, for I have known some amongst them who certainly were anything but logical in their general use of their brains.

The only time I ever was in the Highlands was when I went with Dall and my father to Loch Lomond twenty years ago. I had never seen a drop of Loch Katrine till now. We went from Glasgow to Stirling by railroad in an hour, on Saturday morning. From Stirling we took a light open carriage, a kind of britzska, and pair of horses, and posted the same

afternoon sixteen miles to Callander, where we slept. Sunday morning we took the same carriage with fresh horses to Loch Katrine. The distance is only ten miles of an enchanting drive; and if I had been able to spend the night at the Trosachs, I could have done it perfectly well, for there is an immense big inn there for the reception of tourists; and though the house was shut up for the season, the servants were in it, and we could have procured bed and board there, and I have no doubt a roast fowl and sherry, or oatmeal and whiskey, if we had preferred them. I had, however, to be back in Stirling the same afternoon, and the weather was wild and gloomy, though not cold, nor positively wet till we got into a little one-horse "machine" to drive through the Trosachs, when the mist shrouded the mountains almost from base to summit, and even Ben Aven, close under him as we were, was barely discernible. Ben An was the feature of the scene that struck me most; the form of its crest is so singularly jagged and fine.

We just drove through the pass to the first ripple of the lake, and then turned right-about to Stirling, which we reached before four o'clock in the afternoon, and yesterday morning I was back again in Glasgow, the lakes and mountains remaining in my memory absolutely like a dream. The country from Doune to Callander is beautiful, and in summer it must be an enchanting expedition, though such scenery has its own peculiar winter beauty, grander and more impressive perhaps than even its summer loveliness. I wish I was there again.

I cannot tell you anything more of my receipts at

Glasgow, except that those of the second night were much better than the first; but as those were small, this is not saying much. I have not yet received the "returns."

I am glad the news you got from Ardgillan is satisfactory. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

29, Abercrombie Place, Edinburgh, Wednesday, 13th.

I did not see the eclipse, my dear. I did not know there was to be one, and did not therefore look for it; and if I had, I doubt my having been any the wiser, inasmuch as our mornings of late have been very misty.

I am off to-day with Mrs. Mitchell to Ardoch, where I stay only to-morrow, and return Friday to act here on Saturday. Having promised to go, I do not like to break my word, otherwise it seems to me rather a fuss, and a long way to go for one day's rest. Originally our plan was to spend two or three days there, that being all I could then give; but Mrs. Mitchell, with whom I had promised to go, could not get away from visitors at her own house sooner.

I spent the evening with Cecilia and Mr. Combe on Monday. They are both tired from the effect of their journey still, and look fagged and ill. They have both got the influenza too, which does not mend matters; and I am struck with the alteration in Mr. Combe's appearance. He looks old, as well as ill, and very sad—naturally enough on his return to this place, where his dear brother died.

The *becomingness* of Cecilia's grey, or rather white, hair struck me more than any other change in her. She has lost the appearance of hardness (coarseness), which, I think, mingled slightly with her positive beauty formerly, and is to my mind handsomer now than I ever remember her. She is not nearly so stout as she was; her complexion has lost its excess of colour, has become softer; and the contrast of her fine dark eyes and silvery curls gives her a striking resemblance to Gainsborough's lovely portrait of her mother. She is looking thin and ill, but seems tolerably cheerful.

At the end of my engagement at the theatre, during the whole of which I shall remain with the Mairs, I shall spend a few days with her and Mr. Combe; after which I shall come as far south as Howick, and stay a day or two with B—— G——, and then cross over to Manchester to the Ellesmeres.

I shall hardly be in London before the third week in November. I have had a letter from my sister, announcing their positive return in the spring; but, as she says they will only leave Rome in May, it is improbable that I should see them at all, as I propose going to America by the steamer of the first of June; but Heaven knows what may happen between this and then. Nobody has the same right to "bother" me," as you call it, that you have, for I love nobody so well; besides, as for Emily, she is a deuced deal quicker in her processes than you are, and snaps up one's affairs by the nape of the neck, as a terrier does a rat, and unless one is tolerably alert one's self, she is

off with one in her zeal in no time, whither one would not. . . .

I wish you would tell Mrs. Fitz-Hugh, with my love, that a man who was acting Joseph Surface with me the other night, said to me, "Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you could but be persuaded to commit a trifling *fore paw* (*faus pas*).

Give my love to dear Emily.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I expect to be with the Combes for some few days at least, and do not feel altogether as happy as usual in the anticipation of their intercourse.

I think I have observed growing, as it were, upon them, with regard to certain subjects, a sort of general attitude of antagonism, which strikes me painfully.

All fanaticisms are bad, and the fanaticism of scepticism as bad, or perhaps worse than most others, because it wounds more severely the prejudices of others than it can be wounded by them, professing, as it does, to have none to wound.

I am going to stay with Cecilia all next week, and am rather afraid that I shall have to hear things that I love and reverence irreverently treated. We shall probably steer clear of much discourse on religious subjects, though of late Mr. Combe has appeared to me more inclined than formerly to challenge discussion on this ground.

I am afraid I can at the utmost only expect to see my sister for a fortnight after they return, though

Henry Greville writes me that I cannot possibly give her the mortification and myself the pain of going away just as she comes back, and that I ought, for both our sakes, to stay at least a month in England after her return: but then he wishes to get up a play with us both.

I think Grantley Manor charming. It gave me a great desire to know Lady Georgiana Fullerton personally; but I am told she has a horror of me, for what she calls my "injustice to the Catholics." What that is I do not know; but whatever it is, I am very sorry for this result of it.

Good-bye, dearly beloved.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

*29, Abercrombie Place, Edinburgh,
Monday, October 25th, 1847.*

The last question in your letter, which nevertheless heads it, having been added on over the date, "How is your health?" I can answer satisfactorily—much better. . . . I am much delighted at you and Dorothy reserving your visit to Battle Abbey till I come to you, and only hope the weather may give you no cause to regret having done so. I have promised Emily to go down to Bannisters in December, and shall then pay you my visit at St. Leonard's.

I do much wish to be once more with you and Dorothy. I have just concluded a very pleasant arrangement with Arthur Malkin and his wife for staying a few days in the neighbourhood of the lakes with them, between Keswick and Ambleside, after I leave Howick.

The weather is, I believe, generally favourable for that scenery as late as November. I have never seen the English lakes, and am not likely soon to have so pleasant an opportunity of doing so.

I have received an application from the York manager to act at Leeds, and having agreed to do so, think I shall probably also act a few nights at York, Hull, and Sheffield, while I am thereabouts; all which, together with my visit to the Ellesmeres, will take up so much of my time, that I doubt my being more than a month or three weeks in Orchard Street before my term of possession there expires. . . . I shall be able to answer your questions about the Combes better when I am with them, but besides my own observation I have the testimony of the —s to the fact of their having become much more aggressive in their feeling and conversation with regard to "Church abuses," "theological bigotry," and even Christianity itself. I am sorry to hear this; but if they *hurt* me, I shall heal myself by looking at the Vatican [a fine engraving of St. Peter's, in Mr. Combe's house].

I had a letter from E—— the other day. I am delighted to say that they have quite determined to return in the spring, and it is just possible that I may see them before I leave England.

E——'s account of the Roman reforms is most encouraging, and I must give you an extract from his letter about them.

"A very important decree was published on the 2nd of this month, relative to the organization of a municipal council and magistracy for the city of Rome. Besides the ordinary duties of a municipality,

such as public works, *octroi*, etc., it is to have the direction of education. This is a circumstance the consequence of which it is impossible to overrate or to foresee. Hitherto, education has been monopolized by the clergy, and moreover by the Jesuits (whose schools have always been the best by a very great deal, to give the devil his due). The new law does not abolish their establishments, or interfere with them in any way, but the liberal feeling being so strong in the country, the rising generation will be almost entirely educated in the schools founded by the municipality; it is the greatest blow the hierarchy has yet received. The council consists of a hundred members, chosen from different classes of society. It is first named by the Pope, and then renews itself by elections; there are only four members to represent the ecclesiastical bodies."

There, Hal, what do you think of that? I sit and think of that most lovely land, emerging gloriously into a noble political existence once more, till I almost feel like a poet.

Love to Dorothy. . . . I only make Hayes *sensible* that she is a *fool* twice a week on an average, not twice a day.

Yours ever,
FANNY.

Howick Grange, November 14th.

Surely, my dearest Hal, the next time you say you almost despair of mankind, you should add, "in spite of God," instead of "in spite of the Pope."

I arrived here about three hours ago, and have

received a most severe and painful blow in a letter from Henry Greville which I found awaiting me, containing the news of Mendelssohn's death. I cannot tell you how shocked I am at this sudden departure of so great and good a creature from amongst his impoverished fellow-beings. And when I think of that bright genius (he was the *only* man of genius I have known who seemed to me to fulfil the rightful moral conditions and obligations of one), by whose loss the whole civilized world is put into mourning; of his poor wife, so ardently attached to him, so tenderly and devotedly loved by him; of his children—his boy, who, I am told, inherits his sweet and amiable disposition; of my own dear sister, and poor E——, so deeply attached to him,—I cannot bear to think, I feel half stupid with pain. And yet your letter is full of other sorrow. O God! how much there is in this sorrowful life! and what suffering we are capable of! and yet—and yet—these can be but the accidents, while the sun still shines, and the beauty and consolation and *virtue* of nature and human life still hourly abound.

You ask me if I have written anything in Edinburgh but letters. I have hardly had leisure to write even letters. I do not know when I have worked so hard as during my last engagement there. I have hardly had an occupation or thought that was not perforce connected with my theatrical avocations. I am heartily glad it is over.

Mr. Combe has given me the "Vestiges of Creation" to read, and I have been reading it. . . . The book is striking and interesting, but it appears to me far from strictly logical in its great principal deduc-

tion, as far as we "human mortals" are concerned. Indeed, Mr. Combe, who thinks it most admirable, was obliged to confess that the main question of progress involving dissimilar products from similar causes, was *non-proven*. And I think there are discrepancies, moreover, in minor points: but that may only be because of my profound ignorance.

The book is extremely disagreeable to me, though my ignorance and desire for knowledge combined give it, when treating of facts, a thousand times more interest than the best of novels for me; but its conclusions are utterly revolting to me,—nevertheless, they may be true.

I cannot write any more. B—— has just given me the *Athenæum*, with a long notice of Mendelssohn; and I am thinking more of him just now than anything else in the world. . . .

God bless you, my dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

Leeds, Friday, November 19th.

Mendelssohn's death did indeed give me a bitter and terrible shock. He was one of the bright sources of truth, at which I had hoped I might drink at some time or other. I always looked forward to some probable season of intercourse with him; the likelihood of which was increased by E—— and Adelaide's love for and intimacy with him. Intercourse with him seemed to me a privilege almost certainly to be mine, in the course of the next few years. This is only my own small selfish share of the great general grief. I feel

particularly for E——. He seems to find so very few people that satisfy him, whom he is fond of, or who are at all congenial to him, that the loss of a dear friend, and such a man, will indeed fall heavily upon him.

Those whose sympathies are more general, and whose taste can accept and find pleasure in the intercourse of the majority of their fellow-creatures, are fortunate in this respect, that no one loss can make the world empty for them; and thus the qualities of kindness and benevolence are repaid, like all other virtues, even in this world (which is nevertheless not Heaven), into the bosom of those who practise them.

For a person who has permitted intellectual refinement to become almost a narrow fastidiousness, and whose sympathies are of that exclusive kind that none but special and rarely gifted persons can excite them, the loss of such a friend as Mendelssohn must be incalculable; and I am grieved to the heart for E——.

I do not know what is to be done with Covent Garden. I suppose it will remain an opera-house; for to fit it for that it has been made well-nigh unavailable for any other purpose, as I think we shall find on the 7th December, when a representation of "Scenes" from various of Shakespeare's plays is to take place there, for the purpose of raising funds for the purchase of the house Shakespeare was born in.

You know what my love and veneration for Shakespeare are; you know, too, how comparatively indifferent to me are those parts of the natures, even of those I most love and honour, which belong only to their mortality. The dead bodies of my friends appeal, perhaps, even less than they should do to my feelings;

since they have been temporarily inhabited and informed by their souls; but acquainted as you are with these notions of mine, you will understand that I do not entirely sympathize with all that is being said and done about the four walls between which the king of poets came into his world. The thing is more distasteful to me, because originally got up by an American charlatan of the first water, with a view to thrust himself into notoriety by shrieking about the world stupendous commonplaces about the house where Shakespeare was born. It has been taken up by a number of people, theatrical and other, who, with the exception of Macready, have many of them the same petty personal objects in view. Those whose profession compels them, by the absolute necessity of its conditions, to garble and hack and desecrate works which else could not be fit for acting purposes (a fact which in itself sets forth what theatrical representation really is and always must be—do read, *à propos* to this, Serlo's answer to Wilhelm Meister about the impossibility of representing dramatically a great poetical whole), and who now, on this very Shakespearian Memorial night, instead of acting some one of his plays in its integrity, and taking zealously any, the most insignificant part in it, have arranged a series of truncated, isolated scenes, that the actors may each be the hero or heroine of their own *bit* of Shakespeare. . . . This is all I know of the immediate destinies of Covent Garden. They have written to me to act the dying scene of Queen Katharine, to which I have agreed, not choosing to decline any part assigned me in this "Celebration," little as I sympathize with it.

If I should hear anything further, as I very likely may, from Henry Greville, of the probable fate of Covent Garden next season, I will let you know, that you may dispose accordingly of your property in it.

I have finished the "Vestiges of Creation." I became more reconciled to the theory it presents towards the close of the book, for obvious reasons. Of course, when, abandoning his positive chain (as he conceives it) of proved progression, after leading the whole universe from inorganic matter up to the "paragon of animals," the climax of development, man, he goes on to say, that it is *impossible* to limit the future progress, or predict the future destinies of this noble human result, he forsakes his own ground of material demonstration, on which he has jumped, as the French say, *à pieds joints*, over many an impediment, and relieves himself (and me) by the hypothesis, which, after all, in no way belongs peculiarly to his system, that other and higher destinies, developments, may, and probably do, await humanity than anything it has yet attained here: a theory which, though most agreeable to the love of life, and desire of perfection of most human creatures, in no sort hinges logically on to his *absolute chain of material progression* and development. From the moment, however, that he admitted this view, instead of the one which I think legitimately belongs to his theory, irreconcilable as it seemed to me with what preceded it, the book became less distasteful to me, although I do not think the soundness of his theory (even admitting all his facts, which I am quite too ignorant to dispute) established by his work. Supposing his premises to be all correct, I think he

does not make out his own case satisfactorily; and many of the conclusions in particular instances appear to me to be tacked or basted (to speak womanly) together loosely and clumsily, and yet with an effect of more mutual relation, coherence, and cohesion, than really belongs to them.

Mr. Combe is delighted with the book—because it quotes him and his brother, and professes a belief in phrenology; but Mr. Combe himself allowed that the main proposition of the work is not logically deduced from its arguments, and moreover admitted that though well versed in *all* the branches of natural science, the author was perfectly master of *none*. He attributes the authorship to his friend Robert Chambers, or perhaps to the joint labour of him and his brother William. If his surmise in this respect is true there would be obvious reasons why they should not acknowledge so heterodox a book, especially in Edinburgh.

In asking me for *my* theory of human existence, dear Hal, you must have *forgotten me* in your craving desire for some—any—solution of the great mystery with which you are so deeply and perpetually perplexed.

How should I, who know nothing, who am *exceptionally* ignorant, who seldom read, and seldomer think (in any proper sense of the word), have even the shadow of a theory upon this overpowering theme?

To tell you the vague suggestions of my imagination at various times, would doubtless be but to re-echo some of your own least satisfactory surmises.

I thank God I have not the mental strength *and* *infirmity* to seek to grapple with this impossible sub-

ject. The faint outlines of ideas that have at any time visited my brain about this tremendous mystery of human life have all been sad and dreary, and most bitterly and oppressively unsatisfactory; and therefore I rejoice that no mental fascination rivets my thoughts to the brink of this dark and unfathomable abyss, but that it is on the contrary the tendency of my nature to rest in hope, or rather in faith in God's mercy and power, and moreover to think that the perception we have (or as you would say, imagine we have) of DUTY, of right to be done and wrong to be avoided, gives significance enough to our existence to make it worth both love and honour, though it should consist of but one conscious day in which that noble perception might be sincerely followed, and though absolute annihilation were its termination. The whole value and meaning of life, to me, lies in the single sense of conscience—duty; and that is here, present, now, enough for the best of us—God knows how much too much for me.

Good-bye, my dear. I have a most horrible cough and sore throat, and I have been acting with it, feeling every moment that I was doing my poor *parts of speech* a serious injury by the strain I was compelled to put upon them. You may judge of the state of my voice when I tell you that I received from some anonymous kind friend this morning a bottle of cough mixture, and all manner of lozenges, jujubes, etc. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Orchard Street.

DEAREST H——,

. . . I am going with Henry Greville to see Rachel on Wednesday, in "Marie Stuart." I wish I could afford to see her every night, but it is a dear recreation. Henry Greville is not "teaching me to act," though I dare say he thinks I may derive profit as well as pleasure from seeing Rachel. . . .

All my friends are extremely impatient of my small gains; I am not, though I certainly should be glad if they were larger. . . .

I have moved my Psyche, my beautiful and serene goddess. As the ancient Romans had especial tutelary gods for their private houses, the patron saints of the heathen calendar, she is my adopted divinity. You know I have had her with me in some of my blackest and bitterest seasons, and have often marvelled at the mere combination of lines which have produced so exquisite an image of noble graceful thoughtfulness. She is not without a certain sweet sternness, too; there is immense power, as well as repose, in that lovely countenance,—how—why—can mere curved and straight lines convey so profoundly moral an impression? She is an admirable companion, and reminds me of Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty," which I every now and then feel inclined to apostrophize her with.

I have sent out the big centre china jar to the table on the staircase, and have put my goddess in the drawing-room in its place. . . .

I have received a kind invitation from Lady Dacre to the Hoo, and I shall spend next week there, which will be both good and agreeable for me. I expect to

find Lady G—— there ; she is a person for whom I have a great liking and esteem, and whom I shall be glad to meet. Perhaps, too, dear William Harness ; but I do not know of anybody else.

I forget whether I told you that the Sedgwick's had sent me a friend of theirs, an American country clergyman, to lionize about London, which I have been doing for the last three days. I took him to the British Museum, and showed him the Elgin Marbles, and the library, and the curious manuscripts and books which strangers generally care to see ; but the profit and pleasure, I should think, of travelling, is but little unless the mind is in some slight measure prepared for more knowledge by the possession of some small original stock ; and a great many Americans come abroad but poorly furnished, not only with learning, but with the means of learning.

Charles Greville got me an admission for my Yankee friend to the House of Lords. We were admitted while the business was going on, and saw the curious old form of passing the Acts of Parliament by Commission, than the ceremonies of which it is difficult to imagine anything more quaint, not to say ludicrous, and apparently meaningless.

We heard Lord Brougham and the Duke of Wellington speak, and had an excellent view of both of them.

The House appeared to me too minutely ornamented ; it is rich, elaborate, but all in small detail, too subdivided and intricate and overwrought to be as imposing and good in effect as if it were more simple.

I took my American friend to the Zoological Gardens, and to the Botanical Gardens, in the Regent's Park, which are very charming, and for which I have a private ticket of admission.

This morning I have been with him to Stafford House, to show him the pictures which are fine, and the house itself, which I think the handsomest in London. To-morrow I take him to the opera, and I have given him a breakfast, a lunch, and a dinner, and feel as if I had discharged the duty put upon me, especially as it involved what I have no taste for, *i.e.* sightseeing.

The Elgin Marbles I was glad enough to see again—one has never seen them too often,—and was sitting down to reflect upon them at my leisure, when my American friend, to whom, doubtless, they seemed but a parcel of discoloured, dirty, decapitated bodies, proposed that we should pass on, which we accordingly did.

I am struck with the spirit of conformity by which this gentleman seems troubled, and which Adelaide tells me the young American people they saw in Rome constantly expressed,—the dread of appearing that which they are, foreigners; the annoyance at hearing that their accent and dress denote them to be Americans. They certainly are not comfortable people in this respect, and I always wish, for their own sakes as well as mine, that they had more or less self-love.

I was impelled to say to my young clergyman, whose fear of trespassing against English usages seemed to leave him hardly any other idea, "Sir, are you not a foreigner, an American? May I ask why it is to be

considered incumbent upon you, either by yourself or others, to dress and speak like an Englishman?" . . .

Good-bye, dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

18, *Orchard Street*, November 18th.

I do not know that I ever slept so near the sea as to hear it discoursing as loudly as you describe, though I have been where its long swelling edge was heard rolling up and tearing itself to ribbons on the shingly beach like distant thunder. As for night sounds of any sort, you know my *sound* sleep is the only one I am familiar with.

In the hotel at Niagara, the voice of the cataract not only roared night and day through every chamber of the house, but the whole building vibrated incessantly with the shock of the mighty fall. I have still health and nerve and spirits to cope with the grand exhibitions of the powers of Nature: the majesty and beauty of the external world always acts as a tonic on me, and under its influence I feel as if a strong arm was put round me, and was lifting me over stony places; and I nothing doubt that the great anthem of the ocean would excite rather than overpower me, however nearly it sounded in my ears.

Your description of the terrace, or parade walk, covered with my fellow-creatures, appals my imagination much more. My sympathies have never been half human enough, and in the proximity of one of nature's most impressive objects, I shrink still more from contact with the outward forms of unknown

humanity. However, this is merely an answer to your description; I shall find, by creeping down the shingles, some place below, or, by climbing the cliff, some place above, these dear men and women, where I can be a little alone with the sea.

I observed nothing peculiar about the direction of any letter that I have recently received from you; but then, to be sure, I am not given to the general process, which, general as it is, always astonishes me, of examining the direction, the date, the postmark, the signature, of the letter I receive (as many of these, too, as possible, before opening the epistle); I hasten to read your words as soon as I have them, and seldom speculate as to when, or where, they were written, so that I really do not know whether I have received your Hull letter or not. I do not go thither until Monday next, and return to town the following Sunday. . . .

Oh, my dear; what a world is this! or rather, what an unlucky experience mine has been—in some respects—yes, in *some* respects! for while I write this, images of the good, and true, and excellent people I have known and loved, rise like a cloud of witnesses to shut out the ugly vision of the moral deformity of some of those with whom my fate has been interwoven. . . .

I have agreed with Mrs. Humfreys to take the apartment that T—— M—— had in King Street, from the beginning of January till the beginning of May. She says she cannot let me have them longer than that, but I shall endeavour for at least a month's extension, for it will be so very wretched to turn out and have to hunt for new lodgings, for a term of six weeks.

My success at Leeds was very good, considering the small size of the theatre. . . . I am not exempt from a feeling about "illustrious localities," but the world seems to me to be so absolutely Shakespeare's domain and dwelling-place, that I do not vividly associate him with the idea of those four walls, between which he first saw the light of an English day. If the house he dwelt in in the maturity of his age, and to which he retired to spend the evening of his life, still existed, I should feel considerable emotion in being where his hours and days were spent when his mind had reached its zenith.

A baby is the least intelligent form of a rational human being, and as it mercifully pleased God to remove His wonderfully endowed child before the approach of age had diminished his transcendent gifts, I do not care to contemplate him in that condition, in which I cannot recognize him—that is, with an undeveloped and dormant intelligence.

We know nothing of his childhood, nothing of the gradual growth and unfolding of his genius; his acknowledged works date from the season of its ripe perfection.

You know I do not regret the dimness that covers the common details of his life: his humanity was allied to that of its kind by infirmities and sins, but I am glad that these links between him and *me* have disappeared, and that those alone remain by which he will be bound, as long as this world lasts, to the love and reverence of his fellow-beings. Shakespeare's childhood, boyhood, the season of his moral and intellectual growth, would be of the deepest interest could

one know it: but Shakespeare's mere birthplace and babyhood is not much to me; though I quite agree that it should be respectfully preserved, and allowed to be visited by all who find satisfaction in such pilgrimage.

He could not have been different from other babies you know; nor indeed, need be,—for a *baby*—*any* baby is a more wonderful thing even than Shakespeare.

I have told you how curiously affected I was while standing by his grave, in the church at Stratford-upon-Avon: how I was suddenly overcome with sleep (my invariable refuge under great emotion or excitement), and how I prayed to be allowed to sleep for a little while on the altar steps of the chancel, beside his bones: the power of association was certainly strong in me then; but his bones *are* there, and above them streamed a warm and brilliant sunbeam, fit emblem of his vivifying spirit;—but I have no great enthusiasm for his house. . . .

Does not the power of conceiving in any degree the *idea* of God, establish some relation between Him and the creature capable of any approach by thought to Him? Do we not, in some sense, possess mentally that which we most earnestly think of? is it not the possession over which earthly circumstances have the least power? The more incessantly and earnestly we think of a thing the more we become possessed *by* and *of* it, and in some degree assimilated to it; and can those thoughts which reach towards God, alone fail to lay hold, in any sort or degree, of their object? . . .

Surely, whether we are, or are not, the result of an immense chain of material progression, we have attained to that idea which preserves alive to all eternity the

souls upon which it has once dawned. We have caught hold of the feet of the omnipotent Creator; and to the spirit that once has received the conception, however feeble or remote, of His greatness and goodness, there can be no cessation of the bond thus formed between itself and its great Cause. I cannot write about this; I could not utter in words what I think and feel about it: but it seems to me that if organization, mere development, has reached a pitch at which it becomes capable of *divine* thoughts, it thenceforth can never be anything *less* than a creature capable of such conceptions; and if so, then how much *more*?

Farewell. Love to Dorothy.

Yours ever,

F. A. K.

Orchard Street, Monday 18th.

I arrived yesterday in town, my dearest Hal, and found your letter waiting for me. The aspect of these, my hired Penates, is comfortable and homelike to me, after living at inns for a fortnight; and the spasmodic and funereal greetings of the nervous Mulliner, and the lugubrious Jeffreys, *gladden* my spirits with a sense of returning to *something* that expects me.

About Lady Emily — and her *etherial* confinement: did I not tell you that Mrs. C—— wrote me word from America, that Fanny Longfellow had been brought to bed most prosperously, under the beneficent influence of ether? at which my dear S—— C—— expresses some anxiety touching the authority of the Book of Genesis, which she thinks may be impaired if women continue, by means of ether, to escape from the

special curse pronounced against them for their share in the original sin.

For my part I am not afraid that the worst part of the curse will not abide upon us, in spite of ether; the woman's desire will still be to her husband, who, consequently, will still rule over her. For these (curses or not, as people may consider them), I fear no palliating ether will be found; and till men are more righteous than they are, all creatures subject to them will be liable to suffer misery of one sort or another. . . .

I wonder if I have ever spoken to you of Lady Morley—a kind-hearted, clever woman (who, by the bye, always calls men “the softer sex”), a great friend of Sydney Smith's, whom I have known a good deal in society, and who came to see me just before I left town. In speaking of poor Lady Dacre, and the difficulty she found in accepting her late bereavement, Lady Morley said, “I think people should be very grateful whose misfortunes fall upon them in old age, rather than in youth; they're all the nearer having done with them.” There was some whimsical paradox in this, but some truth too. An habitual saying of hers (not serious, of course, but which she applies to everything she hears) is: “There's nothing new, nothing true, and nothing signifies.” The last time I dined at Lady Grey's a discussion arose between Lady Morley, myself, and some of the other guests, as to how much or how little truth it was *right* to speak in our usual intercourse with people. I maintained that one was bound to speak the whole truth; so did my friend, Lady G——; Lady F—— said, “Toute verité n'est pas bonne à dire;” and Lady Morley told the following

story : " I sat by Rogers at dinner the other day (the poet of memory was losing his, and getting to repeat the same story twice over without being aware that he did so), and he told me a very good story, which, however, before long, he began to repeat all over again ; something, however, suggesting to him the idea that he was doing so, he stopped suddenly, and said, ' I've told you this before, haven't I ? ' And he had, not a quarter of an hour before. Now ladies, what would you have said ? and what do you think I said ? ' Oh yes,' said I, ' to be sure : you were beginning to tell it to me when the fish came round, and *I'm dying to hear the end of it.*' " This was on all hands allowed to have been a most ingenious reply ; and I said I thought she deserved to be highly complimented for such graceful dexterity in falsehood : to which she answered, " Oh, well, my dear, it's all very fine ; but if ever you get the truth, depend upon it you won't like it "—a retort which turned the laugh completely against me, and sent her ladyship off with flying colours ; and certainly there was no want of tolerably severe sincerity in that speech of hers.

Lady Morley's great vivacity of manner, and very peculiar voice added not a little to the drollery of her sallies.

A very conceited, effeminate, and absurd man, coming into a room where she was one evening, and beginning to comb his hair, she exclaimed, " La ! what's that ! Look there ! There's a mermaid ! "

Frederick Byng told me that he was escorting her once in a crowded public assembly, when she sat down on a chair from which another woman had just risen

and walked away. "Do you know whose place you have just taken?" asked he. Something significant in his voice and manner arrested her attention, when, looking at him for an instant with wide-open eyes, she suddenly jumped up, exclaiming, "Bless my heart, don't tell me so! *Predecessor!*" Lord Morley, before marrying her, had been divorced from his first wife, who had just vacated the seat taken by his second, at the assembly to which they had both gone.

On the occasion of my acting at Plymouth, Lady Morley pressed me very kindly to go and stay some days with her at Soltram, her place near there: this I was unable to do, but drove over to see her, when, putting on a white apron, to "sustain," as she said, "the character," she took me, housekeeper fashion, through the rooms; stopping before her own charming watercolour drawings, with such comments as, "Landscape,—capital performance, by Frances Countess of Morley;" "Street in a foreign town, by Frances Countess of Morley,—a piece highly esteemed by *conny-shures*;" "Outside of a church, by Frances Countess of Morley,—supposed by good judges to be her *shiff duver*," etc. . . .

I have just had a visit from that pretty Miss Mordaunt who acted with me at the St. James's Theatre, and who tells me that her sister, Mrs. Nisbett, was cheated at the Liverpool theatre precisely as I was; but she has a brother who is a lawyer, who does not mean to let the matter rest without some attempt to recover his sister's earnings. . . .

I went this morning to inquire at the St. George's Workhouse for the unfortunate girl I took out of the

hands of the police in the park the other day (her offence was being found asleep at early morning, and suspected of having passed the night there), and found, to my great distress and disappointment, that she was in the very act of starting for Bristol.

I had, as I told you, interested dear Mr. Harness, and Mr. Brackenbury, the chaplain of the Magdalen, about her, and when I went out of town she seemed fully determined to go into that Asylum. The chaplain of the workhouse in Mount Street, however, has dissuaded her from doing so, told her she would come out worse than she went in; in short, they have despatched her to Bristol, to the care and guardianship of a poor young sister, only a year older than herself, who earns a scanty support by sewing; and all that remained for me to do, was to pay her expenses down, and send her sister something to help her through the first difficulties of her return. I am greatly troubled about this. They say the poor unfortunate child is in the family way, and therefore would not be received at the Magdalen Asylum; but it seems to me that there has been some prejudice, or clerical punctilio, or folly, or stupidity at work, that has induced the workhouse officials thus to alter the poor girl's determination, and send her back whence she came, no doubt to go through a similar experience as soon as possible again. God help her, and us all! What a world it is! . . .

The clergyman of the workhouse called upon me to explain why he had so advised the girl, but I did not think his reasons very satisfactory. . . .

God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.



Orchard Street.

The houses at Plymouth and Exeter were wretched. . . . These gains, my dearest Hal, will not allow of my laying up much, but they will prevent my being in debt, that horror of yours and mine. I paid my expenses, besides bringing home something, and a considerable increase of health and strength—which is something more. . . .

I remain in town till the end of next week, then go to Norwich, Ipswich, and Cambridge, my midland circuit, as I call it; after which I shall return to London. Towards the middle of August I go to York, Leeds, Sheffield, and Newcastle, thence to visit Mrs. Mitchell at Carolside; after which I shall take my Glasgow and Edinburgh engagements, and then come back to London. There is a rumour of Macready being about to take Drury Lane for the winter, but I have no idea whether it is true or not.

I am sure I don't know what is to become of my poor dog Hero [a fine Irish retriever given me by my friend]. I am almost afraid that Mrs. Humfreys will not take him into her nice lodging. If I can't keep him with me till I go away to America, I should beg you in the interim to receive him for my sake, at Ardgillan.

You cannot think with what a sense of relief at laying hold of something *that could not lie*, I threw my arms round his neck the other day, after — had left me. This is melancholy, is it not? but I believe many poor human creatures whose hearts have been lacerated by their (un)kind, have loved brutes for their freedom from the complicated and reflected false-

hood of which the nobler nature is, alas, capable and guilty.

Tell me if it will be inconvenient to you to take charge of Hero when I go away. In a place where he had a wider range than this narrow little dwelling of mine, and where his defects were not incessantly ministered to by the adulation of an idiotical old maid besotted with the necessity of adoring and devoting herself to something, he would be very endurable. . . .

[I injured one of my hands in getting out of a pony-carriage at Hawick.] Touching my broken finger, my dear, I am sure I did take off the splints too soon, and the recovery has been protracted in consequence; but as I knew it would recover anyhow, and that the splints were inconvenient in acting, and, moreover, expensive, as they compelled me to cut off the little finger of all my white gloves, I preferred dispensing with them. The pain, inflammation, and stiffness, are almost gone, and nothing remains but the thickening of the lower part of the finger, which makes it look crooked, and I think may continue after the injury is healed. I did not, I believe, break the bone at all, but tore away the ligament on one side, that keeps the upper joint in its socket. The cold water pumping is a capital thing, and I give it a douche every time I take my bath. It might, perhaps, be a little better for bandaging, but will get well without it. . . . A healthy body, with common attention to common sense, will recover, undoctored, from a great many evils. In almost all cases of slight fractures, cuts, bruises, etc., if the patient is temperate and healthy, and has no constitutional tendency to fever or inflammation, the

evil can be remedied by cold water bandages and rest.

Give my dear love to my dear Dorothy and your dear Dorothy. I shall be happy with you both, for she is quite too good to be jealous of.

God bless you, dear.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

Orchard Street, Sunday 4th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

First of all let me tell you, what I am sure you will be glad to learn, that E—— S—— is in England. You will imagine how glad I was to see him. I am very fond of him, have great reliance on his mind as well as his heart; and then he seems like something kind and dependable belonging to me—the only thing of the kind that I possess, for my sister is a woman, and you know I am heartily of opinion that we are the weaker sex, and that an efficient male protector is a tower of strength.

In seeing E——, too, I saw, as it were, alive again, the happy past. He seemed part of my sister and her children, and the blessed time I spent with them in Rome, and it was a comfort to me to look at him. . . .

Charles Greville had been out of town, and found the letter announcing E——'s advent, and came up, very good-naturedly, dinnerless, to bring me word of the good news. The next day, however, he was as cross as possible (a way both he and his brother Henry have, in common with other spoiled children), because I expressed some dismay when he said, E——'s obtaining a seat in Parliament was quite an uncertainty

(I think Mr. S—— contemplated standing for Kidderminster). Now, from all he had said, and the letter he had written about it, I should have supposed E——'s return to have been inevitable; but this is the sort of thing people perpetually do who endeavour to persuade others that what they themselves wish is likely to happen. E—— seems quite aware himself that the thing is a great chance, but says that even if he does not get a seat in Parliament, he shall not regret having come, as he wanted change of air, is much the better for the journey, and has had the satisfaction of seeing his sister in Paris. Nevertheless, if this effort to settle himself to his mind in England proves abortive, I do not think the Grevilles will get him back in a hurry again. . . .

I am surprised by the term "worthless fellow," which A—— applies to —— . I think him selfish and calculating, but I am getting so accustomed to find everybody so, that it seems to me superfluous fastidiousness to be deterred from dealings with any one on that account. . . .

I do not write vaguely to my sister about my arrangements; but you know I have no certain plans, and it is difficult to write with precision about what is not precise.

I am not going to Norwich just yet; the theatre is at present engaged by the Keeleys, and the manager's arrangements with them and Mademoiselle Celeste are such that he cannot receive me until August. I may possibly act a night or two at Newcastle in Staffordshire, and at Rochdale, but this would not take me away for more than a week.

In answer to your question of what "coarsenesses" L—— finds in my book ["A Year of Consolation"], I will give you an extract from her letter. "There are a few expressions I should like to have stricken out of it, *par exemple*, I hate the word *stink*, though I confess there is no other to answer its full import; and there are one or two passages, the careless manner of writing which, astonished me in you. You must have caught it from what you say is my way of talking." Now, Hal, I can only tell you, that more than once I thought myself actually to blame for not giving with more detail the disgusting elements which in Rome mingle everywhere with what is sublime and exquisite; for it appeared to me, that to describe and dilate upon one half of the truth only, was to be an unfaithful painter, and destroy the merit, with the accuracy, of the picture. I remember, particularly, standing one morning, absorbed in this very train of reflection, in the Piazza del Popolo, when on attempting to approach the fine fountains below the Pincio I found it impossible to get near them for the abominations by which they were surrounded, and thought how unfaithful to the truth it would be to speak of the grace and beauty of this place, and not of this detestable desecration of it. The place and the people can only be perfectly described through the whole, as you know. Farewell.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Railway Station, Hull, Friday, 4th.

I have been spending the afternoon crying over the tender mercies of English Christians to their pauper

population, till my eyes smart, and itch, and ache, and I shall have neither sight nor voice to read "Coriolanus," which I must do this evening. To this Hull Railway Hotel is attached a magnificent Railway Station (or rather *vice versâ*), shaped like a horse-shoe, with a spacious broad pavement, roofed with a skylight all round, making a noble ambulatory, of which I have availed myself every day since I have been here for my walking exercise. . . .

I was just starting for my walk to-day, when in came old Mr. Frost, my Hull employer, President of the Literary and Scientific Institution, before which I am giving my present readings, the principal lawyer, and, I believe, Mayor of Hull,—a most charming, accomplished, courteous old gentleman of seventy years and upwards, who finding that I was about to walk, proposed to accompany me, and we descended to the Station.

As we paced up and down, I remarked, lying in a corner, what I took at first for a bundle of rags. On looking again, however, I perceived there was a live creature in the rags—a boy, whose attitude of suffering and weariness, as he crouched upon the pavement, was the most wretched thing you can imagine. I knelt down by him, and asked him what ailed him: he hardly lifted his face from his hands, and said, "Head-ache;" and then, coughing horribly, buried his miserable face again. Mr. Frost, seeing I still knelt by him, began to ask him questions; and then followed one of those piteous stories which makes one smart all over while one listens to them; parental desertion, mother marrying a second time, cruelty

from the step-father, beating, starving, and final abandonment. He did not know what had become of them; they had gone away to avoid paying their rent, and left this boy to shift for himself. "How long ago is that?" said Mr. Frost. "Before snow," said the lad,—the snow has been gone a fortnight and more from this neighbourhood, and for all that time the child, by his own account, has wandered up and down, living by begging, and sleeping in barns and stables and passages. The interrogatory was a prolonged one: my friend Mr. Frost is slow by age, and cautious by profession, and a man by nature, and so not irresistibly prompted to seize up such an unfortunate at once in his arms, and adopt it for his own. In the course of his answers the boy, among other things, said, "I wouldn't mind only for little brother." "How old is he?" "Going on two year." "Where is he?" "Mother got him." "Oh, well, then, you needn't fret about him; she'll take care of him." "No, she won't; he won't be having nothing to eat, I know he won't." And the boy covered his face again in a sullen despair that was pitiful to see. Now, you know, Hal, this boy was not begging; he did not come to us with a pathetic appeal about his starving little brother: he was lying starving himself, and stupefied, with his head covered over, buried in his rags when I spoke to him; and this touching reminiscence of his poor little step-brother came out in the course of Mr. Frost's interrogatory accidentally, and made my very heart ache. The boy had been in the workhouse for two years, with his mother, before she married this second husband; and, saying that he had been sent to school, and kindly

treated, and well fed in the workhouse, I asked him if he would go back thither, and he said yes. So, rather to Mr. Frost's amazement I think, I got a cab, and put the child in, and with my kind old gentleman—who, in spite of evident repugnance to such close quarters with the poor tatterdemalion, would by no means leave me alone in the adventure—we carried the small forsaken soul to the workhouse, where we got him, with much difficulty, *temporarily* received. The wife of the master of the poor-house knew the boy again, and corroborated much of what he had told us, adding, that he was a good boy enough while he was there with his mother; but—would you believe it, Hal?—she also told us, that this poor little creature had come to their gate the night before, begging admittance; but that, because he had not a *certain written order* from a certain officer, the rules of the establishment prevented their receiving him, and he had been turned away *of course*. I was in a succession of convulsions of rage and crying all this time, and so adjured and besought poor old Mr. Frost to take instant measures for helping the little outcast, that when we left him by the workhouse fire, the woman having gone to get him some food, and I returned blaspheming and blubbering to my inn, he—Mr. Frost—went off in search of a principal police-officer of Hull, from whom he hoped to obtain some further information about the child, which he presently brought back to me. “Oh yes, the magistrate knew the child; he had *sent him to prison* already several times, for being found lying at night on the wharves, and about the streets.” So this poor little wretch was *sent to prison*, because literally he had not where to lay

his head! . . . I wouldn't be a man for anything! They are so cruel, without even knowing that they are so: the habit of seeing sin and suffering is such a *heart-hardener*.

Well, the boy is safe in the workhouse now, and is, according to his own wish and inclination, either to be sent to sea, or put out apprentice to some trade. I have pledged one of my readings for purposes of outfit or entrance fee, and Mr. Frost has promised me not to lose sight of the child, so I hope he is rescued from sin and suffering, for the present, and perhaps for the future.

Do you remember what infinite difficulty I told you I had had in rescuing that poor little wretch out of the streets of Glasgow? But then, she had the advantage of a *mother*, who drove her into them day after day, to sing her starvation in the miserable mud and rain,—luckily this poor Hull boy's mother had not this *interest* in him.

I have come home, dear Hal, after my reading, and resume my letter to you, though I am very tired, and shall go to bed before I have finished it.

I do remember Robertson's sermon about Jacob wrestling with the angel, and I remember the passage you refer to. I remember feeling that I did not agree with it. The solemnity of night is very great; and the aspect of the star-sown heavens suggests the idea of God, by the overpowering wonder of those innumerable worlds by which one then *sees* one's self surrounded,—which affect one's imagination in a reverse way from the daylight beauty of the earth, for that makes God seem as if He were *here*, in this world, which then is

all we see (except its great eye, the sun) of these multitudinous worlds He has created, and that are hanging in countless myriads round us. Night suggests the vastness of creation, as day can never do; and darkness, silence, the absence of human fellowship, and the suspension of human activity, interests, and occupations, leave us a less disturbed opportunity of meditating on our Creator's inconceivable power. The day, and the day's beauty, make me feel as if God were very near me; the night, and the night's beauty, as if I were very far off from Him.

But, dear Harriet, do not, I entreat you, challenge me to put into words those thoughts which, in us all, must be unutterable. If I can speak of nothing that I feel deeply but with an indistinctness and inefficiency, that make me feel sick as with a bodily effort of straining at what I cannot reach: how can I utter, or write, upon such a subject as this! Do not, I beg, ask me such questions, at least in writing; speaking to you, there might be times—seldom indeed, but some—when I might stammer out part of what I felt on such a subject; but I *cannot* write about it—it is impossible.

I have many things to tell you, for which I am too tired to-night, but I will tell you them to-morrow. God bless you. It has just occurred to me that I have a morning reading to-morrow, and some visits to pay first, and I must go to the workhouse and see that boy once more, and satisfy myself that whatever he is put to hereafter is his own choice; and so I shall have no time to write to you to-morrow, and therefore I will finish my letter to-night. . . . I had an application from Dr. Hawtrey the Provost of Eton, through Mary

Ann Thackeray, the other day, to give some readings to the Eton boys, which I have delightedly agreed to do—but of course refused to be paid for what will be such a great pleasure to me; whereupon, Dr. Hawtrey writes, that my “generosity to his boys takes his breath away.” I think *I* ought to pay for what will be so very charming, as reading Shakespeare to those children. . . .

I had a letter from Mrs. Jameson yesterday, from whom I have heard nothing since she left my house. . . .

And now, dear Hal, I have told you all my news,—oh no, I haven’t either—I went last night, it being my holiday, to hear Mr. Warren, the author of “Ten Thousand a Year,” and the Recorder of Hull, address the members of the Mechanics’ Institute, on the duties, privileges, difficulties, dignity, and consolations of labour. I was greatly delighted. I sat on the platform, opposite that large concourse of working men and women—labourers well acquainted by daily experience with the subject of the eloquent speaker’s discourses,—and was deeply touched by the silent attention and intelligent interest with which, for two hours, they listened to his admirable address.

I have got it, and shall bring it down and read it to you. Good-bye. Do not fail to let me know what I can do for Dorothy. Good night.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

Hull, Thursday, December 2nd, 1847.

My chest and throat, my dear Hal, are well. I have still a slight cough—but nothing to signify. . . .

I never acted in all Yorkshire before. I do not know why, during my "first theatrical career," I did not, but so it was. My harvest now is not likely to be very great, for the prices at the theatres in Leeds and Hull are very low, the theatres not large, and so habitually deserted that an occasional attraction of a few nights hardly has time to rouse the people from their general indifference to these sort of exhibitions. However, I am both living, and saving, and am content.

We have in our last letters got upon those subjects which, upon principle and by choice, I avoid,—bottomless speculations, wherein the mind, attempting to gaze, falls from the very brink, and is drowned, as it were, at the very surface of them.

Your theory of *partial immortality*, is abhorrent to me—I can use no other term. Pray conceive me rightly—'tis an abhorrence of the opinion, which does not include you for holding it; for though my whole being, moral and mental, revolts from certain notions, this is a mere necessity of my nature, as to contemplate such issues is the necessity of certain others, differently organized from mine.

I would rather disbelieve in the immortality of my own soul, than suppose the boon given to me was withheld from any of my fellow-creatures. Besides, I did not, in the position I placed before you, suggest the efficacy of *any special kind of idea* of God, as connecting the holder of it with Him.

For aught I can tell, the noble conception of the Divinity, formed out of the extension of the noble qualities of his own soul by the noblest man, may be further from any adequate idea of God than the gross

notion of a log-worshipper is from the spiritual conception of the most spiritually minded man (only remember *I don't believe this*). But, inasmuch as it is something out of himself, beyond himself, to which the religious element of his nature aspires—that highest element in the human creature, since it combines the sense of reverence and the sense of duty, no matter how distorted or misapplied—it is an idea of a God, it is a manifestation of the germ of those capacities which, enlightened and cultivated, have made (be it with due respect spoken) the God of Fénelon and of Channing. I do not believe that any human creature, called by God into this life, is without some notion of a Divinity, no matter how mean, how unworthy, how seldom thought of, how habitually forgotten.

Superstition, terror, hope, misery, joy—every one of these sentiments brings paroxysms in every man's life when *some* idea of God is seized upon, no matter of what value, no matter how soon relinquished, how evanescent. Eternity is long enough for the progress of those that we see lowest in our moral scale. You know I believe in the progress of the human race, as I do in its immortality; and the barbarous conception of the Divinity, of the least advanced of that race, confirms me in this faith, as much as the purest Christianity of its foremost nations and individuals. Revelation, you say, alone gives any image of God to you; but which revelation? When did God begin, or when has He ceased, to reveal Himself to man? And is it in the Christian Revelation that you find your doctrine of partial immortality and partial annihilation? I believe I told you once of my having read in America, a

pamphlet suggesting that sin eventually *put out*, destroyed, annihilated, and did away with, those souls of which it took possession: this is something like your present position, and I do not know when I received so painful an impression as from reading that pamphlet, or a profound distress that lasted so long from a mere abstract proposition addressed to my imagination.

I believe all God's creatures have known Him, in such proportion as He and *they* have chosen; *i.e.* to none hath He left Himself utterly without witness; to some that witness has been the perfect life and doctrine of Jesus Christ, the most complete revelation of God that the world has known.

All have known Him, by His great grace, in some mode and measure; and therefore I believe all are immortal: none have known Him as He is, and but few in any age of the world have known Him as they might; and an eternity of progress holds forth, to my mind, the only hope large enough to compensate for the difference of advantages here, and to atone for the inadequate use of those advantages.

Dearest Harriet, I hate not to make an effort to answer you, and you like, above all things, this species of questioning, speculating, and discussing. But there is something to me almost irreverent in thus catching up these everlasting themes, as it were, in the breathing-time between my theatrical rehearsals and performances. You will not mistake me. I know that the soul may be about its work (does not George Herbert say—

"Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine"?)

even at such times, but a deep and difficult mental process should not be snapped at thus.

You know I never can *think*, and to think on such subjects to any purpose would almost necessarily involve thinking on none others; and but for my desire to please you, and not put aside with apparent disregard your favourite mental exercises, I should be as much ashamed as I am annoyed by the crude utterance of crude notions upon such subjects to which you compel me.

You say our goodness and benevolence are not those of God: in *quantity*, surely not; but in *quality*? Are there two kinds of positive goodness? I read this morning the following passage in a book by an American, which has been lent to me by a young Oxford man, whom I met, and fell much in love with, at Carol-side—he is a great friend of Dr. Hampden's—"The greater, purer, loftier, more complete, the character, so is the inspiration; for he that is true to conscience, faithful to reason, obedient to religion, has not only the strength of his own virtue, wisdom, and piety, but the whole strength of Omnipotence on his side; for goodness, truth, and love, as we conceive them, are not one thing in man, and another in God, but the same thing in each." I agree with this, dear Hal, and not with you, upon this point.

These speculations are a severe effort to my mind, and besides shrinking from the mere mental labour of considering them, I find it difficult, in the rapid and desultory manner in which I must needs answer your letters, to place even the few ideas that occur to me upon them, clearly and coherently before you.

Did I tell you that that impudent—— I've no more room, I'll tell you in my next. Give my love to Dorothy, and

Believe me ever yours,
FANNY.

Hull, Saturday, December 4th, 1847.

I did tolerably uncomfortably without Jeffreys (a man-servant who had left me), and that, you know, was very well. I paid old Mrs. Dorr something extra for doing all the work in the rooms upstairs, had a fire made in the little man-servant's room in the hall, and, after twelve o'clock, established Hayes therein to attend to my visitors. My table was laid for dinner in the front drawing-room, and at dinner-time wheeled into the back drawing-room, where, you know, I always sit; and after my dinner wheeled out again, and the things all removed in the other room by Hayes. The work is really nothing at all, and it would have been most unnecessary to have hunted up a man-servant for a couple of weeks, for last and next week are the only two that I expect to pass in Orchard Street, before I remove to my King Street lodgings.

You speculate more, dear Hal, than I do, and among all things on that Covent Garden performance, that "Series of Scenes from various Plays of Shakespeare, to be given in his honour, and towards the purchase of his house at Stratford-on-Avon." I suppose it will be a very protracted exhibition, but my only reflection upon the subject was, that I was glad to perceive that my share of it came early in the course of events.

I had no idea of proposing Hero (my dog) as your

sister's inmate, but supposed he would be harboured in the stables, the kennels, or some appropriate purlieu, be sufficiently well fed, and take his daily exercise in your society. This was my vision of Hero's existence under your auspices, and, as you may readily believe, I had no idea of quartering him on the reluctant *dogmanity* of anybody. . . .

I have just had a charming letter from Charles Sedgwick; if I can remember, I will keep it to show it to you.

Order your boots, or anything else, to be sent to me, dear Hal, but you know I shall not be with you yet for a month, and possibly not then; for though no *pleasant* engagement (how nice it is of you to suggest that!) would interfere with my coming to St. Leonard's, *unpleasant* ones might; any opportunity of making money certainly would, and such may occur to interfere with my present plans, which stand thus—I return to town to-morrow (there is but one evening train, so I must travel all night to rehearse on Monday morning for the "Shakespeare Memorial Night," on Tuesday); I shall remain in London a week, and on the following Monday go down to Bannisters for a fortnight, which will bring me within a few days of the expiration of my term in Orchard Street, and I shall return from Bannisters to move myself; on the following Monday, the 3rd of January, I will, please God and you, come down to St. Leonard's. . . .

I was so ill in spirit yesterday that I could not write to you. I am better to-day. Thank God, my patience and courage do not often or long forsake me! . . .

— has written again to borrow money of me; and that impudent Liverpool manager, who *borrowed*, *i.e.* did not pay me, my last night's earnings, when you were there with me, has written to say that, if I will go to Liverpool *and act for his benefit*, he will pay me what he owes me; to which I have replied that, when he *has* paid me what he owes me, we will see about further transactions with each other. Certainly "Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time."

Oh, my dear! in Parker's "Discourse upon Religion,"—the book I told you I was reading—I light upon this passage: "The indolent and the sensual love to have a visible master in spiritual things, who will spare them the *agony* of thought." Is not that definition of thought after my own heart, and just as I should have written it?

God bless you. Give my love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

DEAR HARRIET,

I have not yet read either of Mrs. Gaskell's books, but I mean to do so. I have just got through, with unbounded amazement, a book called "Realities," written by a Miss L——, for whom Lady M—— has taken a great fancy. A more extraordinary production—realities with a vengeance—I certainly have seldom read; and the book is in such contrast with the manner and appearance of the authoress, that it will be a long time before I get over my surprise at both.

Imagine this lady having thought proper to introduce in her story an eccentric vagabond of a woman,

whom she has called "Fanny Kemble." Upon Lady M——'s asking her—I think with some pardonable indignation, considering that I am her intimate friend—how she came to do such an unwarrantable thing; if she was not aware that "Fanny Kemble" was the real name of a live woman at this moment existing in English society, Miss L—— ingenuously replied, "Oh dear! that she'd never thought of that: that she only knew it was a celebrated dramatic name, and so she had put it into her book." *Sancta Simplicitas!* I should think I might sue her for libel and defamation.

The books that women write now are a curious sign of the times, and an indication of great changes in opinion, as well as alteration in practice.

After all, women are *part* men, "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." As long as they benefited—and they did highly—by the predominance of the conservative spirit in civilized society, they were the most timid and obstinate of conservatives. But emancipation, or, to speak more civilly, freedom, is dawning upon them from various quarters; Democracy is coming to rule the earth; and women are discovering that in *that* atmosphere they must henceforth breathe, and live, and move, and have their being.

But the beginning of a great deal of male freedom is mere emancipation; and so it will be, I suppose, with women. The drunken exultation of Caliban is no bad illustration of the emancipation of a slave; and the ladies, more gracefully intoxicated with the *elixir vitæ* of liberty, may rejoice no more to "scrape trencher or wash dish," but write books (more or less foolish) instead.

Do you remember that delightful Negro song, the
 "Invitation to Hayti," that used to make you laugh so?

"Brudder, let us leave
 Buckra land for Hayti :
 Dar we be receive'
 Grand as Lafayette !
 Make a mighty show,
 When we land from steamship,
 You be like Monroe,
 And I like Louis Philip ! "

And when, anticipating the elevation of his noble
 womankind to the elegant and luxurious *idlesse* of the
 favoured white female, the poet sings :—

"No more dey dust and scrub,
 No more dey wash and cookee ;
 But all day long we see
 Dem read the nobel bookee."

(For *read*, read *write*.)

I am beset with engagements ; and, though I am
 very anxious to get away abroad and rest, it would be
 both foolish and wrong to reject these offers of money,
 tendered me on all sides, *speciously* with such *borrowing*
 relations as I enjoy. Good-bye, dear.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[My reading at Eton was a memorably pleasant
 incident of my working days. Dr. Hawtrey at first
 proposed to me to read "Coriolanus ;" but I always
 read it very ill, and petitioned for some other play,
 giving the name of a tragedy, "Macbeth ;" a comedy,
 the "Merry Wives of Windsor ;" and one of the more
 purely poetical plays, "The Tempest ;" suggesting that

the "boys" should vote, and the majority determine the choice. This seemed a mighty innovation on all received customs, and was met with numerous objections, which, however, did not prove insuperable; and "The Tempest," my own favourite of all Shakespeare's dramas, was chosen by my young auditors.

A more charming audience to look at I never had than this opening flower of English boyhood, nor a more delightfully responsive one.

The extraordinary merriment, however, invariably caused by any mention of the name of Stefano whenever it occurred puzzled me not a little; and when, in the last scene, I came to the lines, "Is not this Stefano your drunken butler? Why, he's drunk now!" I was interrupted with such a universal shout of laughter that I couldn't help inquiring the cause of it; when Mr. Stephen Hawtrey, Dr. Hawtrey's brother and one of the masters, told me that Stefano was the nickname by which he was habitually designated among the lads, which sufficiently accounted for their ecstasy of amusement at all the ludicrous sayings and situations of the Neapolitan "drunken butler." The Eton young gentlemen addressed me with a kind and flattering compliment through their captain, and rewarded whatever pleasure I had been able to give them by a very elegant present, which I hope my children will value, but which, upon the whole, is less precious to me than the recollection of their young faces and voices while I read to them.]



Orchard Street, December 8th.

DEAREST HAL,

I was better than I expected to be after my night journey from Hull. Hayes and I had a carriage to ourselves after ten o'clock, and I took advantage of that circumstance to lie on the floor and get some rest. Of course I woke from each of my short naps aching rather severely, but I did sleep the greater part of the night; and the two hours I spent in bed before beginning the day, unstiffened my bones and body. The night was beautifully fine when we left Hull, and continued so more than halfway. We made our entrance into London, however, in wretched rain and wind; but the weather has again become fine, and to-day is beautiful. . . .

The detached stanza of French poetry you send me is a rather exaggerated piece of enthusiasm as it stands thus alone; though, incorporated in the poem to which it belongs, the effect of it may be striking. Some of the stanzas of Manzoni's "Ode to Napoleon" (a very noble poem), detached from their context, might appear strained and exaggerated. That which has real merit as a whole, seldom gains by being disconnected.

Trouble yourself no more about poor Hero, my dear Hal; I am afraid he is lost. Mrs. Mulliner left him in the area this morning, and as for nearly four hours now we have seen and heard nothing of him, there is no doubt that he has made his escape into the wide world of London, and I fear there is no chance of his finding his way back again. I should not have liked his being at Jenny Wade's [a cottager at Ardgillan, whom Miss S—— pensioned]. In the

present condition of Ireland, I should scruple to quarter a dog in a poor person's cabin, giving them for his support what they must needs feel might go some way towards the support of some starving human being. In the stable or kennel of a rich house there is sure to be that much spent, if not wasted, which may warrant the addition of such another member to the establishment; and in your sister's stables and offices there can be no wretch who would look with envy upon the meal eaten by my dog. I would rather a great deal have carried him to America, if I could have managed it, than left him with any one but yourself. At Lenox everything, as well as everybody, has plenty to eat; and he would have been cared for, for his own sake by the young folks, and for mine by the old. But I fear he is so far provided for that I shall never see him again, for his uneducated senses will surely never suffice to guide him back to Orchard Street. . . .

You will be glad, because I am very glad, that poor Hero has come back; and I think his doing so exhibits considerable *nous* in a brute so brutally brought up as he has been. He returned with a bit of broken string round his neck; so somebody had already appropriated him, and tied him up, and he had effected his escape, and come home,—much, I think, to his credit. I was delighted to see him, and poor Mulliner almost did a fit.

Good-bye, dearest Hal. Give Dorothy my best love. You shall have your boots before I come, if Mr. W—— should call for them.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

Bradford, Yorkshire, Thursday, 10th.

It is my opinion, my dear Hal, that you will see me again and again, and several times again, before I leave England. I have just come to this place from Manchester, and have to-day received offers of three new engagements, and have every prospect therefore of being detained until the beginning of next month, and so beholding your well-beloved visage before I set off on my travels; though, whenever I do go, it will certainly be from Folkestone, and not Dover.

I left the Scotts this morning with deep regret. Mr. Scott has not been well during this last visit I have paid them, and I was much shocked to hear that he is threatened with disease of the heart, sudden death at any moment. His wife and her sisters are excellently kind to me; she has but two faults, an excessive *humility* and an excessive *conscientiousness*; they wouldn't be bad for virtues, would they?

Mr. Scott's intercourse is delightful to me; his mind is deep and high, logical and practical, humorous and tender, and he is as nearly *good* as a man can be. He has a still, calm manner, and slow, quiet speech, very composing to me. I wish it might be my good fortune to see more of him.

Farewell, my dear. I begin to feel as if I never should get off; and instead of the pathetic uncertainty as to when we might meet again, which was beginning to affect me with melancholy, have fallen into a sort of reckless indifference about you: so sure am I that we shall see each other, maybe, *ad nauseam* mutually, before I go. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[The remarkable man of whom I have spoken in this letter, John Alexander Scott, was one of the most *influential* persons I have ever known, in the strongest sense of the word. I think the term, "an important human being," by which Sydney Smith described Francis Horner, might justly have been applied to Mr. Scott. The intimate friend of Edward Irving, Carlyle, and Maurice, he affected, to an extraordinary degree, the minds and characters of all those who were familiar with him; and his influence, like all the deepest and most powerful human influence, was personal.

He delivered various courses of lectures, principally, I think, in Edinburgh—Dante being one of his favourite themes; and "Three Discourses" upon religious and moral subjects are, I think, all that remain in printed form of many that he delivered at various times and in various places. They are, as is always the case in the instance of his order of mind and character, though striking and powerful, very inadequate samples of his spirit and intellect.

A very just tribute to his uncommon qualities and extraordinary power of influence appeared, after his death, in the *Spectator*. It was undoubtedly written by one who knew Mr. Scott well, and bore testimony, as all who ever had that privilege have done, to the singular force and virtue of his nature, and its penetrating and vivifying power over others.

My last intercourse with *him* was a letter from *her*, hailing in his name the hope of seeing me at Montreux, in Switzerland, whither I was going in the expectation of finding them. The letter broke off in the middle, and ended with the news, calamitous to

me, as to all who knew him, of his death. At the time when I visited them at Manchester, he had accepted some Professorship in the then newly established Owen's College.]

Woodsley House, Leeds.

I think, my dear Hal, your wish that I might see more of Mr. Scott and his family is likely to be realized. To my great pleasure, I received a note from him the other day, telling me that there was a general desire in Manchester to have the "Midsummer Night's Dream" given with Mendelssohn's music. He wrote of this to me, expressing his hope that it might be done, and that so I might be brought to them again; adding the kind and cordial words, "All here love you"—which expression touched and gratified me deeply; and I hope that the reading may take place, and that I shall have the privilege of a few days' more intercourse with that man.

The name of the noble woman whose impulse of humanity so overcame all self-considerations, of whom he told me, was Miss Coutts-Trotter. [Nursing a person who was in a state of collapse in the last stage of cholera, she had sought to] bring back the dying woman's vitality by embracing her closely, and breathing on her mouth her own breath of life and love.] . . .

I can tell you of no other publications of Mr. Scott. It is the despair of his wife, sisters, friends, and admirers that so few of his good words have been preserved. But in these days of printing and publishing, proclaiming and producing, I am beginning to

have rather a sympathy with those who withhold, than with those who utter, all their convictions. . . . I have always held that what people could put forth from them in any kind was less valuable than what they could not—what they were compelled to retain—the reserve force of their mind and nature; and thinking this, as I do, more and more, I regret less and less such instances as this of Mr. Scott's apparently circumscribed sphere, by the non-publication of his lectures and discourses. He is daily teaching a body of young men; and to such of them as are able to receive his teaching, he will bequeath some measure of his spirit. It is doubtless a pleasure, and a help too, to read the good books of good men; but there are many good men who write good books, and he is among the few who cannot. He has suffered from ill health, particularly difficulties in the head; and though his gift of extemporaneous speech is remarkable, he cannot compose for printing without labour of the brain which is injurious to him. In this he also resembles Dr. Follen, of whom he reminds me, who wrote little, and published less.

I do not know anything of Miss Muloch—that, I think, is the name of the writer whose book you mention as having notices of my uncle and aunt introduced into it. . . .

Publicity is the safest of all protections, as in some sense freedom is also. Women, I suppose, will find this out, as the people are finding it out; but in the beginning of their working out their newly discovered theories into rational practice, people in general, and women in particular, will do some wonderful things.

The women especially, having for the most part had hitherto little positive or practical knowledge of life, will be apt "to make all earth amazed" with the first performances of various kinds of their new experience; but it is all in the day's work of the good old world, which is ordained to see reasonable and good men and women upon its ancient, ever-blooming surface, in greater numbers henceforward than hitherto: but the beginnings are strange. . . .

Yours ever,
FANNY.

2, Park Place, Haliwell Lane, Manchester.

MY DEAREST HAL,

At the conclusion of my reading yesterday evening, letters were put into my hands containing no fewer than six offers of new engagements; and, situated as I am, I cannot reject this money. I have endeavoured, in answering these invitations, to get the readings all as close to each other as possible, and I now think that I may get off about the 22nd; but the same sort of interruption to my plans may occur again, and thus I may be delayed, though I have got my passport and have even written to bespeak rooms at an hotel. . . .

My dearest Hal, you have written to me three days running, and good part of each of your letters is disquisition on *Calvinism*. . . . Thus I have here lying by my side nine pages of your handwriting. I have just swallowed my dinner, after travelling from London, and sit down to discharge part of my debt, and in half an hour (I look at the watch, and it says ten minutes) I must go and dress myself for my reading, and here

still will be the nine pages unanswered to-morrow morning, when I must set off for Manchester.

You talk of the logic of my mind, my dear friend, but my mind has no logic whatever; and in so far as that is concerned, Calvinism need look for as little help as hindrance from me. I do not believe I can *think*; and from the difficulty, not to say impossibility, I find in doing so, I don't think I would if I could; and if that is not logical, neither is that most admirable of all chains of reasoning, "Je n'aime pas les épinards," etc. There, now, here comes my maid to interrupt me, and there's an end of epistolary correspondence; I must go and dress.

Now it is to-morrow morning, dear Hal, and until the breakfast comes I can talk a few more words with you. . . . But don't you know that one reason why I appear to you to have positive mental results, is because I have no mental processes? I never think; for, as a lawyer would say, whenever I do, it seems to me as if there was no proposition (a few arithmetical and scientific ones excepted *perhaps*, like two and two are four) which does not admit of its own reverse. I don't say this is so, but it seems so to me; and whenever I attempt to put the notions that float through my brain, on which I float comfortably enough over infinite abysses of inconclusion into precise form and shape, there is not one of them that does not seem to me quite controvertible; nor did I ever utter or assume a position of which I felt most assured while uttering it, without perceiving almost immediately that it was assailable on many sides. This is extremely disagreeable to me; the labour necessary to establish any

mental or moral proposition simply on intellectual grounds, appears to me so great that I hate the very idea of it, and then I hate myself for my laziness, and wonder if some "judgment" does not await wits that will not work because work is tiresome. But if I appear to you to have strong convictions, it is because I have strong mental and moral impulses, instincts, intuitions, and never allow myself to weaken them by that most debilitating process, long-continued questioning, leading to no result.

You ask me what book I read now to put me to sleep—why, Murray's "Handbook for France;" ditto, for Savoy, Switzerland, and Piedmont; ditto, for the North of Italy, and the foreign "Bradshaw." These furnish my lullaby now-a-nights.

I read yesterday, in the railroad carriage, a little story translated from the French by Lady (Lucy) Duff Gordon, with which I was greatly touched and delighted. It costs one shilling, and is called "The Village Doctor," and is one of those pale green volumes headed, "Reading for Travellers," to be found on all the railroad bookstands. I thought it charming, and a most powerful appeal to the imagination in behalf of Roman Catholicism.

I have already told you what route I intend to take, and I think we shall be a week or ten days going from Paris to Turin, coasting all the way from Marseilles, as I wish to do.

I do not read at Manchester to-day, but Hallé, who conducts the music, wishes me to attend a rehearsal, which, of course, I am anxious to do at his request. On Monday I read the "Midsummer Night's Dream,"

and on Tuesday "Macbeth," at Mr. Scott's desire. Tomorrow I shall, I hope, hear Mr. Scott read and comment again on the Bible, and I am looking forward with great pleasure to being with him and Mrs. Scott again.

No doubt there are several more direct ways of getting to Nice than coasting round, as I propose doing, but I wish to see that Mediterranean shore, and have no desire to travel hard. . . .

Adelaide Procter [the daughter of my friends was to be my companion in this journey] has no enthusiasm whatever for me; she does not know me at all, and I do not know her at all well; and I do not think, when we know each other more, that she will like me any better. Her character and intellectual gifts, and the delicate state of her health, all make her an object of interest to me. . . . I love and respect Mr. Procter very much; and her mother, who is one of the kindest-hearted persons possible, has always been so good to me, that I am too glad to have the opportunity of doing anything to oblige them. I am going to Turin because, as they have entrusted their daughter to me, I will not leave her until I see her safe in the house to which she is going; I owe that small service to the child of her parents. . . . Dear Harriet, if you will come to Switzerland this summer, nothing but some insuperable impediment shall prevent my meeting you there. If you are "old and stiff," I am *fat, stuffy, puffy, and old*; and you are not of such proportions as to break a mule's back, whereas if I got on one I should expect it to cast itself and me down the first convenient precipice, only to avoid carrying me to the next.

I spent Thursday evening with Mrs. Jameson; she had a whole heap of people at her house, and among them the American minister and his niece—Philadelphians. . . .

I do not pity Mrs. Jameson very much in her relations with Lady Byron. I never thought theirs a real attachment, but a connection made up of all sorts of motives, which was sure not to hold water long, and never to hold it after it had once begun to leak. It was an instance of one of those relationships which are made to *wear out*, and as it always appeared so to me, I have no great sympathy with either party in this foreseen result.

I pity Mrs. Jameson more because she is mortified than because she is grieved, and I pity Lady Byron because she is more afraid of mortifying than of giving her pain. It is all very *uncomfortable*; but real sorrow has as little to do with it now as real love ever had. . . . I am writing to you at Mr. Scott's, where I arrived yesterday afternoon, the beginning of my letter having been written in London, the middle at Bradford, and the end here.

It is Sunday afternoon: our morning service is over. I am sorry to say I find both Mr. and Mrs. Scott quite unwell, the former with one of those constitutional headaches from which he has suffered so much for many years. They incapacitate him for conversation or any mental exertion, and I am a great loser by it, as well as grieved for his illness. . . . Farewell.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

[Lucy Austin, the clever and handsome daughter of a cleverer and handsomer mother—Mrs. John Austin, wife of the eminent lawyer and writer—excited a great deal of admiration, as the wife of Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, in the London society of my day. Loss of health compelled her to pass the last years of her life in the East; and the letters she wrote during her sojourn there are not only full of charm and interest, but bear witness to a widespread personal influence over the native population among whom she lived, the result of her humane benevolence towards, and kindly sympathy for, them.

One or two amusing incidents occurred with regard to my reading of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" at Manchester. The gentlemen who had the management of the performance wrote to me offering me forty pounds for my share of it—a very liberal price, which I declined, my price for one of my readings being invariably *twenty* pounds. At the end of the performance one of the gentlemen of the committee came to pay me my salary, which having done, he expressed himself, in his own behalf and that of his fellow-managers, greatly obliged to me for the liberality I had exhibited (honesty, it seemed to me) in not accepting double my usual terms when they offered it to me. "And," said he, drawing a five pound note from his pocket-book, "I really—we really—if you would—if you could—allow us to offer you five pounds in addition——" The gentleman's voice died away, and he seemed to be becoming nervous, under the effect of the steadfast seriousness with which, in spite of the greatest inclination to burst out laughing, I

listened to this strange proposal. The five-pound note fluttered a little between his finger and thumb, and for one moment I had a diabolical temptation to twitch it from him and throw it into the fire. This prompting of Satan, however, I womanfully resisted, and merely civilly declined the gratuity; and the gentleman left me with profuse acknowledgments of the service I had rendered them and my "extreme liberality."

My friend Charles Hallé, coming in just at this moment, was thrown into fits of laughter at the transaction, and my astonishment at it.

Hallé was a friend of ours, an admirable musician, and a most amiable man, and one of the best masters of our modern day. His style was more remarkable for sensibility, delicacy, and refinement, than for power or brilliancy of execution; but I preferred his rendering of Beethoven to that of all the other virtuosi I ever heard; and some of the hours of greatest musical enjoyment I have had in my life I owe to him, when he and his friend Joachim, playing almost, as it seemed, as much for their own delight as ours, enchanted a small circle of enthusiastic and grateful listeners, gathered round them in my sister's drawing-room.

Mr. Scott's comment upon my reading gave me great pleasure. "It was good," he said, "from beginning to end; but you *are* Theseus." Oddly enough, a similar compliment was paid me in the same words at the end of a reading that I gave for the Working Men's Institute in Brighton, when my friend, Mr. R——, kindly complimenting me on the performance,

said, "It was all delightful: but you *are* Henry V.," and whatever difference of opinion may have existed among my critics as to my rendering the tragic and comic characters of Shakespeare's plays, I think the heroic ones were those in which I ought to have succeeded best, for they were undoubtedly those with which I had most sympathy.]

Fulford, York, Saturday, 3rd.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I am amused at your gasping anxiety to be told where I am going, as if I was about to depart into some non-postal region, where letter of yours should never reach me more, instead of spending the next week in Edinburgh, which surely you did know. . . . My dearest Hal, J—— W—— has just come into my room, bringing the news of the Emperor of Russia's death. It has seized me quite hysterically, and the idea of the possible immediate cessation of carnage and desolation, and war and wickedness (in that peculiar shape), has shaken me inexpressibly, and I am shocked at the tears of joy that are raining from my eyes, so that I can't see the paper on which I am writing to you; and if I can thus weep my thanksgivings for the news of this man's death, who have no dear son, or brother, or husband on that murderous Crimean soil, think of the shout of rejoicing which will be his only dirge throughout France and England. I am shocked at the exclamation of gratitude which escaped my lips when I heard the announcement. Poor human soul, how terrible that its sudden summons from its heavy and difficult responsibilities

should thus be hailed by any other human creature ! and yet how many will draw a long breath, as of a great deliverance, at this news !

I can hardly write at all, my hand shakes so, and I cannot think of anything else ; and yet I had purposed to send dear Dorothy some account of her family here, who are all well and most kind to me. I will wait a while. . . .

DEAREST DOROTHY,

I sit here in this pleasant room [I was in Miss Wilson's home], the prospect from which is improved by the rising of the river, which presents the appearance of a lake. The snowdrops hang their white clusters above the brown mould of the garden beds, and watery rays of sunshine slant shyly across the meadows. The whole is very sweet and peaceful, and I was enjoying it extremely, when the report of this imperial death broke like a peal of thunder over it all, as unexpectedly as terribly.

To-morrow I am to go and hear afternoon service at the minster, which I have never seen. Everything is done for my pleasure and satisfaction that can be thought of, and I feel very grateful for it. The thought of the old love and friendship between my dead kindred and the former owners of this house makes the place pleasant with a saddish pleasantness to me.

Dear Dorothy, I wish you were here ; I write you a very affectionate kiss, and am

Yours,
FANNY.

George Hotel, Bangor, Monday, 20th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

If you had given way to your impulse of accompanying us to Wales, I do not think you could have returned under three days, or that even by that time you could in any degree have recovered from the effect of our to-day's passage. Every creature on board was sick except M—— and myself. . . .

"À quelque chose malheur est bon," and the indisposition I was suffering all yesterday preserved me from the lesser evil of sea-sickness. This was my experience the last time I crossed the Atlantic, when my voyage was preceded by a week of serious illness, and during the whole passage I did not suffer from sea-sickness. . . .

On our arrival here, we found that the excellent Miss Roberts [mistress of the charming hotel at Bangor] had treated us exactly as the last time; *i.e.*, "A party were just finishing dinner in our sitting-room. She was very sorry, very sorry indeed; but it would be ready for us in less than a quarter of an hour;" and we were thrust provisionally into another, where letters, books, workboxes, indiarubber shoes, and smoking-caps attested that we had no business, and suggested that their owners were in all probability the "party" finishing off their dinner in our bespoken apartment, which gave me an inclination to toss all the things in the room about, and poke the smoking-caps into the indiarubber shoes; but I didn't. What innumerable temptations I do resist! I assured Miss Roberts I was very ill-tempered, and proceeded to make assurance doubly sure by blowing her up sky-

high, to which she merely replied with a Welsh "Eh! come si ha da far?" and declared that if I was in her place I should do just the same, which excited my wrath to a pitch of fury.

We had some lunch, and then set off to the quarries. The afternoon was bright and beautiful, and we were charmed with the drive and all we saw, M—— never ceasing to exclaim with fervent satisfaction at the comfortable, cheerful, healthy, well-to-do appearance of the people and their habitations—a most striking and suggestive contrast to all we had seen in poor Ireland, certainly. . . .

We have just done dinner, and M—— is fast asleep on the sofa, with "Pilgrim's Progress" in her arms. My head aches, and my nerves twitch with fatigue and pain, but I am better than I was yesterday.

The trains from this place are very inconvenient. The one we have to go by starts from here at nine, and does not reach London till half-past seven in the evening, so we shall have a wearisome day of it. . . .

Give my kindest love to dear Mrs. Taylor and "the girls." I shall think of them with infinite anxiety, and pray, "whenever I remember to be holy," that this dreadful war may now soon come to a close, and they be spared further anguish. [Colonel Richard Taylor, Miss S——'s nephew, was with the army in the Crimea.]

I am ever most affectionately yours,

FANNY.

Bath, Monday, December 9th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

. . . You cannot think how forlorn I feel, walking in and out of our room here without farewell or greeting from you; and yet the place where you have been with me has a remembered presence of your affectionate companionship that makes it pleasant, compared to those where I go for the first time and have no such friendly association to cheer me. My disposition, as you know, is averse to all strangeness, and takes little delight in novelty; and the wandering life I lead compels me to both, forbidding all custom and the comfortable feeling of habit and use, which make me loth to leave a place where I have stayed only three days, for another where I have never stayed at all.

I was not very happy at Oxford. The beautiful place impressed me sadly; but that was because I was very unwell and sad while I was there. The weather was horrible; a dark greasy fog pervaded the sky the whole time. The roads were so muddy as to render riding odious, and the streets so slimy that walking was really dangerous as well as disagreeable. Still, I saw some things with which I was much charmed, and have no doubt that, if I could but have had an hour's daylight, I should have been delighted with the place altogether.

E—— S—— came down from London on Thursday morning, and took me to see the fine collection of drawings by Raphael and Michael Angelo at the Taylor Institute, and I spent three hours there in a state of great enjoyment. I wandered in ignorant wonderment through the Bodleian Library and the

Ashmolean Museum, with A—— M——, who seemed quite as little familiar with the learned treasures of the place as myself. He took me to see his own college, Christ Church, with which, especially the great dining-hall, I was enchanted; and with the fine avenue at the back of the colleges, and the tower and cloisters of Magdalen.

I have no doubt I should enjoy another visit to Oxford very much; but I was miserable while I was there, and could not do justice to the beauty of the place. The inn where I stayed was dirty and uncomfortable, and dearer than any I have yet stayed at. My sitting-room was dingy and dark, and I was glad when I came into this large light sitting-room of ours again, out of which, however, they have removed the piano—a loss I have not thought it worth while to replace, as I go to Cheltenham on Wednesday afternoon. . . . You ask what I would sell my “English Tragedy” for. Why, anything anybody would give me for it. It cannot be acted, and nobody reads plays nowadays—small blame to them. . . .

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

Cheltenham, Thursday, 12th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I found your loving greeting on my arrival here yesterday evening. I am troubled at your account of yourself. . . . What *things* these bodies of ours are! I sometimes think that, when we lay them down in the earth, we shall have taken leave of all our sinfulness; and yet there are sins of the soul that do not lodge in the flesh, though the greater proportion of

our sins, I think, do: and when I reflect how little control we have over our physical circumstances, what with inherited disease and infirmity, and infirmity and disease incurred through the ignorant misguidance of others during our youth, and our own ignorant misdirection afterwards, I think the miseries we reap are punishment enough for much consequent sin; and that, once freed from the "body of this death," we shall cease to be subject to sin in anything like the same degree. . . . It is very muddy underfoot; but if the sky does not fall, I shall ride out on my old post-horse at twelve o'clock.

Certainly your question, as to where the wise men are who are to encounter the difficulties of legislation for this country next spring, was an exclamation—a shriek—and not an interrogation, addressed to *me* at any rate; for though I suppose God's quiver is never empty of arrows, and that some *are* always found to do His work, it may be that saving this country from a gradual decline of greatness and decay of prosperity may not be work for which He has appointed hands, and which therefore will not be done. . . .

I declined being in the room we formerly occupied in this house, because I feared, now the days are so much shorter, that it would be inconveniently dark. I am in a charming light room, with three windows down to the ground, and a bewitching paper of pale green, with slender gold rods running up it, all wound round with various coloured convolvuli. It's one of the prettiest papers I ever saw, and makes me very happy. You know how subject I am even to such an influence as that of a ridiculous wall-paper. . . .

I have had no conversation with Mr. Churchill; but, in spite of my requesting him not to be at the trouble of moving the piano into my present sitting-room, as I am here for so short a time, I find it installed here this morning. He certainly is the black swan of hotel-keepers; and how kind and indulgent people are to me everywhere! . . . My young devotee, Miss A——, acquiesced very cordially in all my physical prescriptions for mental health, and did not seem to take at all amiss my plunging her hysterical enthusiasm first into perspirations, and then into cold baths.

Her maid has been with me this morning, with lovely fresh flowers—a bunch of delicious Persian lilac, and two flower-pots full of various mosses, smelling so fragrantly of mere earthy freshness that no perfume ever surpassed it.

The only other greeting she sent me was some pretty lines of Victor Hugo's, with which I was unacquainted, and which I send you, not for their singular inappropriateness as applied to me, but for their graceful turn:—

“Tu es comme l'oiseau posé pour un instant
 Sur des rameaux trop frêles,
 Que sent ployer la branche, et qui chante pourtant
 Sachant qu'il a des ailes;”

which I translate impromptu thus:—

Thou art like the bird that alights, and sings
 Though the frail spray bends, for he knows he has wings.
 God bless you, my dear. Love to dear Dorothy.
 Ever as ever yours,
 FANNY.

Worcester, Tuesday, 17th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

Those pretty French lines I sent you are by Victor Hugo, a man of great genius, but almost the most exaggerated writer of the exaggerated modern school of French style. Some of his poems, in spite of this, are fine and charming; and, indeed, there is not much better French to be found than the prose of some of the French writers of novels and essays. Madame George Sand, Merimée, Ste. Beuve, write with admirable simplicity and force.

I sent my young adorer back, in return for her quatrain, Millevoye's lines on the withered leaf—a far more appropriate image of my peregrinations. These, no doubt, you know, ending with four pretty lines—

“Je vais où va toute chose,
Sous me plaindre, ou m'inquiéter
Où va la feuille de rose,
Et la feuille de laurier.”

. . . You ask after my audiences. At Bath the same singular-looking gentleman, who is beautiful as well as singular looking, and wonderfully like my uncle John, came and sat at my last morning reading in the same conspicuous place. He is a helpless invalid, and was wheeled in his chair through my private room, to the place which he occupied near my reading-stage. His name is C——, and he and his wife were intimate friends of John Kemble's, and sent to beg I would see them after the reading. As I had to start immediately for Cheltenham, this was impos-

sible, which I was very sorry for, as I should like to have spoken to that beautiful face.

You impress upon me the value of the blessing of health, and I think I estimate it duly; for although I said it mattered little how I was, I meant that, isolated as I am, my ill health would affect and afflict fewer persons than that of some one who had bonds and ties of one sort and another. . . . My work goes on without interruption, and I think with little variation in my mode of performing it; and I make efforts of this kind, sometimes under such circumstances of physical suffering and weakness, that I am almost heartedly incredulous about the difficulty of doing *anything* that one *has to do*—which is not very reasonable either, for the force of will, the nervous energy, which carries one through such efforts, depends itself on physical conditions, which vary in different temperaments, and in the same temperament at different times.

The first day of my arrival in Cheltenham I received a note from Miss A——'s mother—a very touching expression of thanks for what she calls my kindness to her child, full of anxiety about the training and guiding of her mind and character, accepting with much gratitude my offer of personal acquaintance with her daughter (personal acquaintance is an excellent antidote to enthusiasms), whom she brought herself the next day to see me. . . . In our conversation I insisted much on the importance of physical training, and commended to her, after the highest of all help (without which, indeed, none other can avail), systematic and regular exercise, and systematic and

sedulous occupation, both followed as a positive duty; all possible sedatives for the mind and imagination; and the utmost attention and care to all the physical functions. I gave her the wisdom which I have bought; but she will buy her own, or I am much mistaken. . . . I went on Sunday to the cathedral to hear afternoon service, but was late, and did not get within the choir, but sat on a chair in a lonely corner of the transept, and followed the service from without the pale. Yesterday, at my usual hour for exercise, I went to walk by the river; but rain came on, and I finished my walk under the cloisters, which rang from end to end with the shrill shouts of a parcel of school-boys, let out for their noon-day recess. Last night the weather was fearful, a perfect storm of wind and rain, so that, though my audience was small, I was agreeably surprised to find I had any at all.

I have not seen the letter you refer to in the *Times*, but think it very likely Charles Greville should write such a one, as I heard him say he should give the public a piece of his mind on the subject, and he occasionally does write in the *Times*, and his views are precisely what you describe those of "Carolus" to be.

Good-bye, dear. I have a *bundle* of violets from you this morning, for which many thanks. Love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,
FANNY.

18, Orchard Street, December 7th.

I have no patience with letters at all, my dear Hal. I am conscious half the time I write that I don't say

clearly what I mean, and when I get your answers, I have that disagreeable conviction confirmed. Perhaps it is just as well, however; for the sort of feverish impatience I have very often while writing, because of the insufficiency of the process to express, as rapidly and distinctly as I wish, my thoughts, is so excessive, as to be childish. I am content, henceforth, to answer you to the best of my *circumstances* (for it is not to the best of my ability, really) on any subject you please. It is enough that my words are of use to you, and God knows it signifies nothing at all that I cannot conceive how they should be so. You have misunderstood me, or I misexpressed myself, with regard to the ground of my objecting to write upon the subjects we have lately discussed in our letters. I do not think it irreverent to advert to the highest subjects at any time. That which is most profoundly serious to me, is always very near my thoughts—so much so that it mingles constantly with them and my words in a manner rather startling and shocking, I think, to people whose minds are parcelled out into distinct and detached divisions—pigeon-holes, as it were—for the sacred and profane, and whose seriousness never comes near their mirth. This is not at all the case with me, with whom they are apt to run into each other very frequently; seriousness is perhaps more habitual to my mind than folly, but my laughter and jests are not very remotely allied to my deepest convictions.

My instincts of vital truth being a very essential part of me, *must* go with me to the playhouse, rehearsals, and performances, and all the intermediate time of various occupations, so that it is not my

" veneration " which is shocked at the superficial mode in which I have handled these themes, while writing of them to you, but my " conscientiousness," which suggests the whole time that such matters should not be spoken of without sufficient previous process of reflection, and that it is behaving irreverently to *anything* that requires consideration to talk of it crudely without any. If the sincerest and most strenuous mental application can hardly enable us to arrive at glimpses of the truth upon those subjects, there is an impertinent levity in uttering mere *notions* about them which have been submitted to no such test. You do *think*, and though you come to no conclusions, are perfectly entitled to utter your *non-conclusiveness* ; but I have a cowardly dread of the labour of thinking steadily and consecutively upon these difficult subjects, and I have certainly not at present the proper leisure or opportunities for doing so, and therefore but for your last letter I should say it was a *shame* to speak upon them. But since the vague suggestions which arise in my mind upon these only important matters comfort and are of any use to you, then, my beloved friend, they have a value and virtue, and I shall no longer feel reluctant to utter them.

I have written this last page since my return from Covent Garden Theatre, where I have been enacting the dying scene of Queen Katharine, and doing what I am as sorry for as I can be for anything of that kind.

At the conclusion of my performance the audience called for me, but I was seized with a perfect nervous terror at the idea of going on, and left the house as quickly as possible.

All the other actors will be called for, and will go on, and I shall incur unpleasant comments and probably have very untrue motives attributed to me for having, as it must appear, ungraciously withdrawn myself from the public call. This does not trouble me very deeply, but I am sorry for it because I am afraid it will be misinterpreted and noticed, and considered disrespectful, which it was not. . . .

Give my dear love to Dorothy. I hope to be with you on the 3rd of January.

I am ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

18, Orchard Street, Tuesday, 8th.

Now I must lump my answer to you, my dearest Hal—a thing that I hate doing; but here are three unanswered letters of yours on my table, and I shall never get through the payment of them if one letter may not do for the three, for every day brings fresh claims of this sort, and I feel a kind of smothering sensation as they accumulate round me, such as might attend one's gradually sinking into a well: what though Truth were at the bottom—if one was drowned before one got to her? . . .

Send the pamphlet on "Bread," to Lenox, and write to Elizabeth Sedgwick about it—that is pure humanity, and I see you do not think I shall copy the recipe and measurements correctly. (It's pouring with rain, and thundering as loud as it knows how in England.) . . .

My spirits are fair enough, though the first evening I spent alone here, after I came back, tried them a

little, and I had a cowardly impulse to rush in next door [my friends the Miss Hamiltons, Mrs. Fitz-Hugh's sisters, were my neighbours] to be with some friendly human beings; but I reflected that this would never do—those who are alone, must learn to be lonely. . . . This was the only *black* hour I have had since my return to London. . . .

I have finished the first volume of Grote's "*History of Greece*." O ye gods, ye beautiful gods of Greece, that ever ye should have lived to become such immortal bores through the meritorious labours of an eminent English historian! Thank Heaven, I have done with what has hitherto been always the most attractive part of history to me—its legendary and poetical prologue (I hate the history of my dear native land the moment the Commons begin to vote subsidies), and I do not think I ever before rejoiced in passing from tradition to matter-of-fact in an historical work. I have no doubt, now we have come down from Olympus, I shall enjoy Mr. Grote's great work much more.

I have read through Morier's "*Hadji Baba in England*," while eating my dinner, in order not to eat too fast, a precaution I learned years ago while eating my lonely dinners at Butler Place day after day. (Of course Grote was too heavy as sauce for eating.) At other seasons I have read through another number of the *Dublin Magazine*, and during my hair-combings continue to enchant myself with "*Wilhelm Meister*." I am reading the "*Wanderjahr*," having finished the "*Lehrjahr*." I never read the former in German before; it is altogether a wonderful book. I practise

before breakfast, and I have drawn for two hours every day lately. I have received and returned visits, and when my daily exercise takes its place again among my occupations, my time will be full, and I hope to bless God for my days, even now. . . . This answers you as to my spirits. . . .

I had a letter from E—— yesterday, desiring me to forward my book to them, and talking of still remaining where they are, as long as the heat is endurable and the children continue well.

I had a note from Lady Duff Gordon yesterday, who is just returned from Rome, where she saw my sister frequently and intimately; and she seems to think Adelaide very tolerably resigned to remain where she is, especially as she has found a cupboard in her palazzo, which has so delighted her that she is content to abide where such things are rare and she has one, rather than return home where they are common and she might have many. In the mean time, seats in the next Parliament are, it seems, to go begging, and Charles Greville has written to E—— again to come over and stand. . . . I disapprove of this incessant urging E—— to return, especially as the Grevilles only want him to become a British legislator in order that she may open a pleasant house in London and amuse them. . . .

You ask me what I shall do with regard to America. If I act there, I shall do so upon the plan I started with here; *i.e.* a nightly certainty, to be paid nightly: it is what the managers send to offer me, and is, without doubt, the safest, if not the most profitable plan. . . .

I am diverted with your rage at Liston [the eminent surgeon under whose care I had been]. I must say, I wish he had been a little more attentive to me professionally. . . .

My singing neighbours—I suppose lodgers for the season—have departed, or, at any rate, become silent; I hear them no more, and make all my own music, which I prefer, though sometimes of an evening, when I am not singing, the lonely silence round me is rather oppressive. But my evenings are short; I dine at seven, and go to bed at ten; and in spite of my endeavours to achieve a better frame of mind, I look with positive joy at my bed, where, lying down, the day will not only be past, but forgotten. . . . It is difficult for me not to rejoice when each day ends. . . .

Dear Hal, I dined with the Horace Wilsons, and in the evening my father came there. He said Miss Cottin, with whom he was to have dined, was ill, and had put him off; that he had only come up from Brighton the day before, and was going back to-morrow—to-day, *i.e.*; that he was not well, but that Brighton agreed with him, and that he should steam about from Brighton to Havre and Dieppe and Guernsey and Jersey, as that process suits him better than abiding on dry land. . . .

Orchard Street, Thursday, June 10th.

Of course, dear Harriet, I know that the officials of our public charities cannot be thrown into paroxysms of pity by every case of misery brought before them; they would soon cease to be relieving officers, and

have to be relieved themselves. But "there is reason in roasting of eggs," whatever that may mean: our forefathers knew, and so did Touchstone, for he talks of "an ill-roasted egg, done all o' one side." I assure you when I went to the workhouse to see after that wretched young girl who was taken up for sleeping in the park because she had nowhere else to sleep in, though I cried like a Magdalene, and talked like a magpie, I felt as if I was running my head against a stone wall all the time I appealed to the authorities to save her from utter ruin. The only impression I seemed to make upon them was that of surprise that any one should take to heart in such wise the case of some one not belonging to them. Perhaps the worthy overseer thought me her sister in another sense from that in which I am so, from the vehemence with which I urged upon him the imperative duty of snatching so young a creature from the doom to which she seemed inevitably delivered over. All their answers reminded me of Mephistopheles' reply to Faust's frantic pity for Gretchen, "She is not the first."

Now to answer your last question. I do not intend to cut the manager of the Princess's Theatre; but I do not either intend to make any application to him. If he offers me a reasonable weekly engagement, I will take it, and make him a curtsy; if he does not, I will do without it, and live as I best may on what I have already earned, and what I can earn in the provinces, till the spring. . . .

C— came up from Bath to London with me, and after talking politics, art, and literature, began upon religion, which, not being controversially disposed, I

declined, commending him to the study of the newspaper, and, curling myself up in one of those charming long seats of the Great Western railroad coaches, went to sleep, and so accomplished the latter part of my journey, in spite of that dangerous proximity, an unconverted heterodox Protestant. Farewell, my dearest Hal.

I am ever as ever yours,
FANNY.

18, *Orchard Street*, December 10th.

DEAREST HAL,

. . . I had a horrible day yesterday, from which I am not yet recovered this morning. It wound up by the shock of hearing of Liston's death. There was something in my last intercourse with him that made this unexpected intelligence very painful; and then his wonderful strength, his great, noble frame, that seemed to promise so long and vigorous a hold on life, made his sudden death very shocking. When I met him last in the park, he told me he was very ill, and had been spitting up a quart of blood after walking twenty-five miles, and that there was something all wrong with his throat; in spite of which, I was greatly shaken by the news of his death, which was occasioned by aneurism in the throat.

I am marking "Wilhelm Meister" for you; it is a book that interests me almost more than any other I could name; it is very painful, and I know nothing comparable to the conception and execution of Mignon. The whole book is so wise, so lifelike, so true, and so merciless in its truth, that it is like life itself, endured

by a stoic, an illustration of what existence would be to a thoughtful mind without faith in God—that faith which alone can bear us undespairing over the earth, where the mere doom of inevitable change would be enough to fill the human soul with amazement and anguish.

Goethe's books always make me lay a terrified and aching hold on my religious faith; they show me, even as life itself does, the need of steadfast belief in something better, if one would not lie down and die from the mere sense of what has been endured, what is endured, and what must be endured.

I forgot to tell you that I have had proposals again from the Norwich manager, and from Bath and Bristol; and yesterday the Princess's Theatre potentate called upon me; but upon my telling him that I should prefer transacting my arrangements with him in writing rather than *vivâ voce*, he took himself off. . . .

God bless you, dear. Give my dear love to Dorothy.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

18, Orchard Street, December 11th, 1847.

MY DEAR HAL,

I do not feel sure, from the tenor of your letter, that you do not wish to have my dog Hero boarded at Jenny Wade's; if you do, he shall go there. You are a far better judge than I am of the propriety of keeping a well-fed dog among your starving people. That they themselves would do so, I can believe; for they are impulsive and improvident, and more alive

to sentiments of kindness and generosity than to the dictates of common sense and prudence, or of principles of justice. Hero has been used to luxury, both in his lodging and board; but human hearts have to do without their food, and shall not his dog's body? I am fond of him, poor fellow, and would fain have him kindly cared for. . . . I do not consider your parallel a just one—between the bestowing of existence upon flies and the withholding immortality from a portion of the human race, except, indeed, that both may be exercises of arbitrary will and power. It is perfectly true that the clay has no right to say to the Potter, "Wherefore hast Thou fashioned me thus?" or, "Why am I a man, and not a beast?" But as regards the Creator's dealings with the human race, inscrutable as His designs are to mortal intelligence, the moral nature of man demands certain conditions in the conditions of his Maker, higher and better than his own; and the idea of a partial immortality seems to me repugnant to the highest human conception (and we have none other) of God's mercy and justice, and that simply because all men, no matter how little advanced in the scale, appear to have some notion of a Divinity and a Deity of some sort, to possess a *germ* of spiritual progress capable of development beyond the term and opportunities afforded by this existence; and if, as I believe, the progressive nature belongs to all, then it seems to me a moral inconsistency to allow its accomplishment only to a few. If you say that whole nations and races formerly and now, and innumerable individuals in our own Christian communities, hardly achieve a single step in this onward career of moral

development, I should reply that the progress of the most advanced is but comparative, and far from great, and that chiefly on this account the belief in a future existence appears rational, indeed the only rational mode of accounting for our achieving so much and so little—our advancing so far and no further here. The boon of mere physical existence is great, but if there were none greater, we should not surely possess faculties which suggest that to make some of His moral and rational children immortal, and others not, was not in accordance with the perfect goodness and justice of our Father. This life, good as He pronounced it to be, and as it surely is, would not be worth enjoying but for those nobler faculties that reach beyond it, and even here lay hold of the infinite conception of another after death. To have given these capabilities partially, or rather their fulfilment unequally, seems to me a discord in the divine harmony of that supreme Government, the inscrutability of which does not prevent one seeing and believing, beyond sight, that it is perfectly *good*. To have bestowed the idea of immortality upon some and not others of his children, seems to me impossible in our Father; and since (no matter how faint in degree or unworthy in kind) this idea appears to be recognized as universal among men, the fulfilment of it only to some favoured few seems still more incredible, since 'tis a *yearning* towards Him felt by all His human creatures—a capacity, no matter how little or erroneously developed, possessed by all.

Admitting God's absolute power over matter, there surely is a moral law which *He* cannot infringe, for it

is Himself; and though I do not know what He can do with the creatures He has made, I know He cannot do wrong; and if you tell me that my wrong may be His right, I can only reply to that, *He is my Right*, the only true, real, absolute Right, of which I have any conception, and that to propose that which seems to me wrong as an attribute or proceeding of His seems to me nonsense. . . .

Of course, a good beginning is an especially good thing in education; but I think we are apt to place too much faith, upon the whole, in what we can do with children's minds and souls. Perhaps it is well we should have this faith, or we might do less than we ought, whereas we not unfrequently do a good deal that is without result that we can perceive; nevertheless, the world goes on, and becomes by slow degrees wiser and better. . . . I met Macready while I was riding to-day; and though I could not stop to say much to him, I told him that I particularly wished to act with him. He has been told, I understand, that I have positively refused to do so; and though his acquaintance with me is slight, I should feel grateful to him if he would believe this, in spite of what representations to the contrary he might have heard. He said that my honesty and truth were known to him, though he had had but little intercourse with me, and that he entirely believed what I said. I was glad of this accidental opportunity of saying this to him, as I would not have sought him for the especial purpose. Good-bye, my dear.

I am ever yours affectionately,

FANNY.

Bannisters, Southampton, Thursday, 16th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

. . . Mrs. Fitz-Hugh does not appear to me in her usual vivacious state of mind, and I am afraid I shall not contribute much to her enlivenment, being rather out of spirits myself, and, for the first time in my life, finding Bannisters melancholy. . . . Walking up a small back street from Southampton the other day, I saw a little child of about five years old standing at a poor mean kind of pastry-cook's window, looking, with eyes of poignant longing, at some baked apples, stale buns, etc. I stopped and asked him if he wished very much for some of those things. He said yes, he wished very much for some baked apples for his *poor little brother who was sick*. I wish you could have seen the little creature's face when I gave him money to buy what he wanted, and he carried off his baked apples in his arms; that look of profound desire for the sake of his brother, on the poor little childish face, has haunted me. I went to see his people, and found them poor and ill, in much distress; and the mother, looking at her youngest child, a sickly, wasted, miserable little object, lamented bitterly that she did not belong to such and such associations, for then, "if it should please God to take the child, she should have five pounds to bury it" (I wonder if these wretches are never killed for the sake of their burial money?); "but now she hadn't so much as would buy a decent rag of mourning"—a useless solicitude, it seemed to me, who think mourning attire a superfluity in all classes.

I have had a letter from the Leamington manager,

desiring me to act there, which I will do, some time or other.

I have a riding-habit of my own, and need not hire one at Hastings; but I shall be glad to hire a horse while I am with you, as, you know, I do not mind riding alone. . . . I feel intensely stupid, which makes me think I must be ill (admire, I beg, the conceit of that inference), as I have no other symptoms of indisposition. Farewell. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Bannisters, Southampton, Friday, December 17th.

I have spoken with even more than my usual carelessness and inaccuracy upon the subject of my readiness to comply with other people's wishes, but I seriously think one ought to comply with a request of *anybody's* that was not an impertinent or improper one. I suppose everybody is inclined to fulfil the wishes of persons they love. . . . But I am not given to the "small attentions," *les petits soins* of affection, and therefore am always particularly glad to know of any special desire of a friend's that I can comply with; a specific wish, too, is a saving of trouble, like the questions in your letters which are equivalent to wishes in another way, and indicate the particular thing you want to know. . . .

I have been out of spirits and much depressed during the first days of my stay at Bannisters, but this gloom is passing off, and I am resuming my more habitual buoyancy of temper. . . .

Bannisters, December 22nd.

If you don't promise me good, I mean wholesome, food, when I come to St. Leonard's, I won't stay with you a minute. I have, for some years past, considered that there was an important deficiency in my human nature, which, instead of consisting, like that of most people, of three elements, is wanting in what I should call the middle link between its lowest and highest extremities. Thus, for some time now, I have felt intimately convinced that I had senses and a soul, but no heart; but I have now further come to the conclusion that I have neither sense, soul, nor heart, and am, indeed, nothing but a stomach. . . . Now, don't retort upon me with starving populations, in and out of poorhouses; and your grand national starving experiment in Ireland; neither try to make me adopt it when I come to St. Leonard's, for I won't. . . .

You will be glad to hear that poor old Mrs. Fitz-Hugh is better these two or three last days, and, except for the weakness and irritation in her eyes, is tolerably well and comfortable; and I, having recovered from the blue devils, am able to amuse her a little better than I did when first I came. I am glad you mentioned that your comment on my health was meant for *fun*. A man sat by me in Edinburgh at dinner one day, and asked me if I had ever read Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," which frightened me into an indigestion; and when I told Mr. Combe of it, he gave a sad Scotch laugh, like a postman's knock, "Ha! ha! just like Farquharson's dry humour!"

You say that, as far as my own constitution is concerned, you believe my theories are right. Pray, my

dear, did I ever attempt to meddle with your constitution? Permit me to say that the hygienic faith I profess has this in common with my other persuasions, that I am no propagandist, and neither seek nor desire proselytes. No, my dear friend, it is the orthodox medicine-takers, not the heterodox medicine-haters, who are always thrusting their pill-boxes and physic-bottles into their friend's bodies, and dragging or driving their souls to heaven or hell. If my physical doctrine saves my body, and my religious doctrine my soul, alive, it is all I ask of it; and you, and all other of my fellow-creatures, I deliver over to your own devices, to dose, drug, and "oh, fie!" yourselves and each other, according to your own convictions and consciences.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

18, Orchard Street, December 28th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I would rather have the "garret" looking towards the sea than the "bedroom" looking over houses, provided I can have a fire in said garret; and pray, since I can have my choice of the two rooms, may I inquire why the one that I do not occupy may not be appropriated to Hayes's use? It seems to me that if there are two empty rooms for me to choose from, I may likewise hire them both if I choose, and give one to my maid, and keep whichever I like best for myself. *Che ti pare, figlia mia?* Have the goodness, if you can, to take both the vacant rooms for me, and I will inhabit the garret, if, as I said before, it is susceptible of a fire.

I left Mrs. Fitz-Hugh a little more quiet and composed, in spite of her having just received the news of Lord Harrowby's being at the point of death. . . . She has had much to try her in the melancholy events at Sandon, and she persists in looking over a whole collection of old letters, among which she found the other day a miniature of her boy, Henry, the sailor who died, which she had forgotten that she possessed; and she comes down from this most trying task of retrospection in a state of nerves so lamentable that no ingenuity of affection, or utmost desire to cheer and relieve her, can suggest a sufficiently soothing process for that purpose. She cannot be amused at all now by anything that does not excite her, and if she is over-excited she suffers cruelly from it. Thus, the reading of "*Jane Eyre*," which, while I continued it, kept her in a state of extreme expectation and interest, appeared to me, upon the whole, afterwards, to have affected her very unfavourably. . . .

I will bring you Charles Greville's book about your most painful country, and some music. . . .

Good-bye, dearest Hal. My affectionate love to dear Dorothy.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

18, Orchard Street.

. . . You ask me for my impressions of Déjazet, and the piece I went to see her in; and here they are. The piece in which she came out was called "*Vert Vert*." You remember, no doubt, Gresset's poem about the poor parrot, so called; well, instead of a

bird, they make this Vert Vert a young boy of sixteen, brought up in a girl's convent, and taken out for a week, during which he goes to Nevers, falls in with garrison officers, makes love to actresses, sups and gets tipsy at the mess, and, in short, "gets ideas" of all sorts, with which he returns again to his convent. If you can conceive this part, acted to the life by a woman, who moves with more complete *disinvoltura* in her men's clothes than most men do, you may imagine something of the personal exhibition at which we assisted. As for me, my eyes and mouth opened wider and wider, not so much at the French actress, as at the well-born, well-bred English audience, who, women as well as men, were in a perfect ecstasy of amusement and admiration. I certainly never saw more admirable acting, but neither did I ever see such uncompromising personal exposure and such perfect effrontery of demeanour. I do not think even ballet-dancers more indecent than Mademoiselle Déjazet, for their revelations of their limbs and shapes are partial and momentary, while hers were abiding and entire through the whole of her performance, which she acted in tight-fitting knee-breeches and silk stockings; nor did I ever see such an unflinching representation of unmitigated audacity of carriage, look, and manner, in any male or female, on or off the stage. . . .

She always wears men's clothes, and is seldom seen without a cigar in her mouth. She is extremely witty, and famous for her powers of conversation and pungent repartees. She is plain, and has a disagreeable harsh shrill voice in speaking; her figure is thin, but straight, and well made, and her carriage and movements as

graceful as they are free and unembarrassed ; her singing voice is sweet, and her singing charming, and her spirit and talent as an actress incomparable. But if I had not seen it, I should not have believed that so impudent a performance would have been tolerated here : tolerated it not only was, but applauded with enthusiasm ; and Mademoiselle Déjazet carries the town before her, being the least decent actress of the most indecent pieces I ever saw.

Good-bye. Give my love to Dorothy.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Offenbach's burlesque Operas were still in the future.]

29, King Street, St. James's, January 14th.

I have not heard again from Bath, and so have answered your two questions, dearest Hal, and will tell you what little I have to tell of my installation in my new lodging here.

I read the *Times*, *studiously*, all the way up to town, and was alone in my railroad carriage. As soon as we reached King Street, I sent Hayes off to Orchard Street, to see for letters, cards, etc. On entering my room (you will remember the upper front room, where we visited Lady W—— together), I saw a beautiful white hyacinth, standing in the window, and knew directly that Emily had sent it to me. I found, too, a most kind and affectionate letter from her. . . . Fanny Wilson and Mrs. Mitchell had called while I was away, and two gentlemen who had not left their names—probably the Grevilles. . . . I don't like either my

room or my furniture, I am sorry to say ; but I shall get attached to both in a couple of days. . . . At a little after four, Henry Greville called and stayed some time, telling me as usual all manner of gossip—among other things that his brother Charles was supposed to be *the author of Jane Eyre* ! I wonder by whom ?

Lord Ellesmere's gout is better, and they have been able to get him down to Hatchford—their place near Weybridge. Henry Greville complained bitterly of Adelaide's not writing to him about their new house in Eaton Place, which she wants him to get papered and prepared for them,—a job he is very willing to undertake, provided she will send him detailed and specific instructions, which he is now waiting for in vain, and in great disgust at her laziness. . . . I worked at my translation of "Mary Stuart," till bed time. . . . It is impossible to say how much I miss you and dear Dorothy, and how chilled to the marrow I felt when I had left the warm and kind atmosphere of your affectionate companionship. . . . However, an additional oppressive sense of my loneliness was the price I was sure to pay for my week's happy fellowship with you and Dorothy. And, after all, it was worth the price.

I wrote this much yesterday, dear Hal ; and yesterday is over, and has carried with it my cowardly fit of despondency, and I am already back in the harness of my usual lonely life, and feel the galling on the sore places of my spirit less ; . . . and every hour will bring occupation and business (such as they are, as Hamlet very contemptuously observes),

and I shall have something to do—if not to think of. . . .

I have heard from Norwich, and find I shall have less to prepare than I expected for two nights, Friday and Saturday. I shall act at Yarmouth, and repeat what I play at Norwich.

Mrs. Jameson has taken rooms in this house I find, and comes here to-night, and I shall be very glad of some of her company. . . . Certainly London, much as I hate it, agrees better with me than St. Leonard's; either the air or the water there are bad for me. I am much better than when I was there. . . .

God bless you. Kiss your Good Angel for me—how much I love and revere her, and how I rejoice that you have such an inestimable friend and companion! I have been very happy with you, my dear and good and kind friends.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

29, King Street, St. James's, Saturday, January 15th.

I dined at home yesterday, dear Hal, and spent the evening in reading "Vanity Fair." It is extremely clever, but hitherto I do not like it very much. I began it at Bannisters last winter, and then I did not like it, wonderfully clever as I thought it. Lord Ellesmere says it is better than anything of the kind (novels of manners and morals) since Fielding; but as far as I have yet gone in it, it seems to me to have one very disagreeable quality—the most prominent people in it are thorough worldlings, and though their selfishnesses, and meannesses, and dirtinesses, and pettinesses, are admirably portrayed—to the very life,

indeed—I do not much rejoice in their company. It is only within the last year that I have been able to *get through* “Gil Blas,” for the same reason; and though I did get through, I never got *over* the odiousness of the people I lived with during the four volumes of his experiences of life.

Is not Shakespeare *true* to human nature? Why does he never disgust one with it? Why does one feel comparatively clean in spirit after living with his creatures? Some of them are as bad as real men and women ever were, but some of them are as good as real men and women ever are; and one does not lose one’s respect for one’s kind while reading what he writes of it; and his coarse utterances, the speech of his time, hurt one comparatively little in the midst of his noble and sweet thoughts. . . .

I am going with Henry Greville to Drury Lane to-night, and perhaps he will eat his dinner here. He has a perfect mania for playhouses, and cannot keep out of them, and I would as lief spend my evening in hearing pretty music as alone here. . . .

I drove up and down Regent Street three times in vain to find your identical cutler, Mr. Kingsbury: perhaps he has left off business, and some one else has taken his shop. So what shall I do with your scissors? Do you think if I talk to them they will be sharpened? . . .

I have not heard again from Bath, and have seen nobody but Fanny Wilson, with whom I dine to-morrow, and Mrs. Mitchell’s two boys. . . .

I shall get through my packing very well. Hayes is greatly improved, and really *begins* now to be useful

to me. Thus we most of us begin only just as we come to the *end* and leave off.

I was driving about all yesterday, doing commissions ; to-day the sun shines, and I am going to wade in the mud for my health.

God bless you. Kiss dear Dorothy for me.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Norwich, Wednesday, January 20th.

I have found your cutler, Kingsbury ; and very glad I was to find him, for I hate not being able to execute a commission exactly as I am desired to do. . . .

When I said that people never love others better than themselves, I did not mean *more*, but in a better way than they love themselves. I mean that those who are conscientious in their self-regard will be conscientious in their regard for others, and that it takes good people to make good friends ; and I do not consider this a "paradox of mine," as you uncivilly style it. It is a *conviction* of mine, and I feel sure that you agree with it, whatever your first impression of my meaning may have been when I said that people never loved others better than themselves (*i.e.* with a better kind of love). I know that very unprincipled people are capable of affection, and their affection partakes of their want of principle : people have committed crimes for the sake of the love they bore their wives, mistresses (oftener), and children ; and half the meannesses, pettinesses, and selfishnesses of which society is full, have their source in unprincipled affection as much as in unprincipled self-love.

I had already taken to my King Street lodging when I left it for this place. You know I have a horror of new places and a facility of getting over it, which is a double disadvantage in this wandering life of mine; for I am perpetually undergoing the process of feeling miserable and lonely in a new place, and more miserable and lonely still when I leave it. The room I have here is gloomy, but opens into my bedroom, which is comfortable, and I shall soon attain the easy liking of habit for it.

Mrs. —, dear Harriet, is without tact, and learns nothing, which is one reason why, in spite of her many good qualities and accomplishments, I cannot get on with her. I breakfasted with her on Sunday morning, and she abused A—— to me—not violently, of course, but very foolishly. She is wanting in perception, and is perpetually committing sins of bad taste, which provoke people—and me “much more than reason.” I do not suppose I shall see enough of her to admit of her “drying me up” (as the Italians say for boring), but I always find it difficult to get on with her, even for a short time.

There is an element of *ungenuineness* about her, I believe quite involuntary; . . . and it does not so much consist in telling stories, though I believe she would do that on proper occasions, like everybody else (but you, who never would know which were proper occasions), as in a crooked or indirect moral vision, an incapacity for distinguishing what is straight from what is not, which affects me very unpleasantly.

On Saturday evening I went to Drury Lane, with Henry and Charles Greville, the latter having invited

himself to join us. I spent a rather dolorous three hours hearing indifferent music, indifferently sung, and admiring compassionately the mental condition of such a man as my friend Henry, who must needs divert himself with such an entertainment, having, moreover, taste enough to know what is really good, and yet persuading himself that this was not bad, only because to him anything is better than spending an evening quietly alone at home. . . . On the other hand, several things struck me a good deal. The music of the opera was poor, but it was not worse than much of Donizetti's music, and it was composed by an Englishman. It was put together with considerable skill and cleverness, but was far less agreeable than the poorest Italian music of the same order; and it was well executed, by a good orchestra, chiefly composed of English musicians. The principal singers were all English, and some of them had fine voices, and though they seldom used them well, they did so occasionally; and, upon the whole, did not sing much worse than Italian performers of the same class would have done. The choruses and concerted pieces, also all given by English people, were well executed, though stupid and tiresome in themselves; and certainly the progress our people have made in music in my time, to which the whole opera testified, is very great. The audience was very numerous, and though the galleries were crowded, and it is Christmas-time, and the after-piece was the pantomime, there was not the slightest noise, or riot, or disturbance, even among "the gods," and the pieces in the opera which were encored, were redemanded in the polite fashion of the Queen's Theatre, by a pro-

longed, gentle clapping, without a single shout or shriek of "Hangcor!" or "Brayvo!" This is a wonderful change within my recollection, for I remember when, during the run of a pantomime, the galleries presented a scene of scandalous riot and confusion; bottles were handed about, men sat in their shirt-sleeves, and the shouting, shrieking, bawling, squalling, and roaring were such as to convert the performance of the first piece into mere dumb show.

All this is well, and testifies to an improved civilization, and not to a mere desire to ape those above them in society; for that could hardly suffice to persuade these Drury Lane audiences that they are amused by a tiresome piece tiresomely acted, and tedious musical strains, of which they cannot carry away a single phrase, which sets nobody's foot tapping or head bobbing with rhythmical sympathy, being all but devoid of melody.

I am very fond of music, but I would rather have sat out the poorest play than that imitation opera; the scenery, dresses, decorations, etc., were all very good, and testified to the much more cultivated taste of the times in all these matters.

On Sunday I dined with the Horace Wilsons, whom I had not seen for some time, and for whom I have a very great regard. . . . Returning home, I stopped at dear old Miss Cottin's. . . . I am much attached to her, and think, next to my own dear Aunt Dall, she is one of the sweetest and most unselfish creatures I have ever known, and love her accordingly. . . .

I left London for this place on Monday morning, and having a sulky deliberate cab-driver, arrived at

the station just five minutes after the train had departed. This kept me waiting from 11.30 till 3.30, during which time Hayes, thinking I should be hungry, went out privately, and coming back with a paper of biscuits, pointed out a raspberry tart at the bottom of it, and said, "Here is a little tart I have got on purpose for you." Was not that courtly and kind of her?

I act here till Thursday. Friday and Saturday I act at Yarmouth; and I shall return to town on Sunday, unless the Vice-Chancellor should allow the manager to open the Cambridge Theatre, which is not generally allowed during term; if he should, I shall act there on Monday night, and only return to town Tuesday morning.

I have promised Mrs. Grote to go down to the Beeches on Saturday, 29th, and shall only stay there till Monday 31st. This is all I know of myself at present, except that I am

Affectionately yours,

FANNY.

DEAR DOROTHY,

Here is my love with my pen and ink, which I flatter myself are as wretchedly bad as those of any gentlewoman in the universe, and St. Leonard's.

You may be impertinent to Hal; she is only a bully, and will give in if you try: if you don't like to try, as you are meek and lowly, I'll try for you, when I come down, if you'll give me your power-of-attorney and instructions, without which I don't suppose I should know how to be impertinent. Farewell, dearest.

Dorothy. I love you entirely for your own sake; I don't like mixing up matters, and thank God for you, for Harriet's sake, as often as I think of you both.

Begun at Norwich, finished at Yarmouth, Friday, 21st.

I do but poorly at Norwich, my dearest Hal, in body and estate, having a wretched influenza, sore throat, sore chest, and cold in my head, through which I am obliged to stand bare-necked and bare-armed, bare-headed and almost bare-footed (for the thin silk stockings and satin shoes are a poor protection), on the stage, to houses, I am sorry to say, as thin as my stockings; so that the money return for all this fatigue, discomfort, and expense is but inconsiderable, *i.e.* by comparison, for undoubtedly, it is a fair harvest for such grain as I sow.

My mind rather thrives upon this not too prosperous condition of my body and estate, inasmuch as I naturally make some effort to be courageous and cheerful, and therefore do better in that respect than when I was cheerful and needed no courage, while you were spoiling me at St. Leonard's with all your love for me, and Dorothy with all her love for you.

In half-an-hour I leave this place for Yarmouth, where I act to-night and to-morrow. The manager has made an arrangement with me to act at his theatres at Lynn and Cambridge next week, so that instead of returning to London the day after to-morrow, I shall not do so until Friday, 28th. . . .

We have dismal weather, snow on the ground, and blackness in the skies. My poor Hayes has got the influenza too, and goes hacking and snivelling at my

heels like an unpleasant echo. I shall be thankful for both our sakes when our winter work is over, for the exposure is very great; and though, of course, she has much less of it than I have, she bears it worse, catches colds oftener, and keeps them longer than I do. . . .

I should, I believe, find it very difficult indeed to be economical, and yet I suppose that if I felt the duty and necessity of it I should be more so than I am. The saving of money without any special motive for it does not appear to me desirable, any more than self-denial without a sufficient motive—and I do not call mere mortification such—appears to me reasonable. I do not feel called upon to curtail the comforts of my daily life, for in some respects it is always miserable, and in many respects often inevitably very uncomfortable; and while I am labouring to spare sacrifice and disgrace to others, I do not see any very strong motive for not applying a sufficient portion of the money I work so hard for, to make my wandering and homeless life as endurable as I can. . . .

Your mode of living is without pretension, and without expenditure for mere appearances; and I feel certain that appearances, and not the positive and necessary comforts of life, such as sufficient firing and food, are the heaviest expenses of gentlefolks. . . . If the life is more than meat or raiment, which I quite agree to, meat and raiment are more than platters and trimmings; and it is the style that half the time necessitates the starvation. . . .

Now I am at Yarmouth; though t'other side the page I was at Norwich. The earth is white, the sea is black, the sky grey, and everything most melancholy.

I act here to-night, and to-morrow and on Sunday go on to Lynn, where I act Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; and Thursday at Cambridge. On Friday I go back to town, and on Saturday to Mrs. Grote's. I am in just such a little room as those we used to pass in walking along the Parade at St. Leonard's—a small ground-floor room, about sixteen feet square, the side facing the sea, one large bow window in three compartments; just such a gravel terrace before it as the one we walked up and down together; and the very same sea, dark, neutral-tinted, with its frothing edge of white, as if it was foaming at the mouth in a black convulsion, that your eyes look upon from your window. It is in some respects exactly like St. Leonard's, and again as much the reverse as sad loneliness is to loving and delightful companionship.

I have a sort of lost-child feeling whenever I go to a strange place, that very few people who know me would give me credit for; but that's because they don't know me.

God bless you, dear. Kiss dear Dorothy for me.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

Yarmouth, 22nd.

My very dear and most sententious friend, I never *do* run the time of my departure for railroad trains "to the chances of free streets and fast-driving cabmen;" I always allow amply for all accidents, as I have a greater horror of being hurried and jostled even than of being too late. But my driver, the day I left town, was, I think, inexperienced as well as

sulky. He was very young, and though I was too ignorant of city localities to direct him positively, my recollection of the route which I had traversed before seemed to me to indicate that he did not take the most direct way.

You ask me what I think of E——'s note, and if it seems "wonderfully aristocratic" to me? Aristocratic after the English fashion, which, thank God, is far from being a very genuine fashion—their "airs" being for the most part *adulterated* by the good, sound, practical common sense of the race, as their blood is *polluted* with the wholesome, vigorous, handsome, intelligent vital fluid of the classes below them. No real aristocrat would have mentioned Miss ——'s maiden name as if she was a woman of family—(*née* —*geborne*; that was a delightful German woman who said she wasn't *geborne* at all)—for Miss ——, being only a banker's daughter, was, of course, "nobody."

The real aristocratic principle is not—I say again, thank God!—often to be found among us islanders of Britain. In Austria, where the Countess Z—— and the Princess E—— are looked upon as the earth under the feet of the Vienna nobility, the one being Lord S——'s daughter and the other Lord J——'s, they have a better notion of the principle of the question. There were only four families in all the British peerage who could have furnished their daughter with the requisite number of quarterings for one of those Austrian alliances.

In folly, as in wisdom, a principle is at least consistent; but that the aristocratic pretensions of our upper class can never be: for our gentry is of more

ancient date in a great many instances, and our nobles are, fortunately for themselves and us, a mixed race, admitting to the temporary fellowship of social companionship and the permanent alliance of matrimony, wealth, influence, beauty, and talent from every grade beneath them; therefore they are fit to endure, and will endure longer than any other European aristocracy, in spite of Prince Pückler Muskau's epigram against the most "mushroom of nobilities."

The "airs" they do give themselves are, therefore, very droll, whereas the similar pretensions of an Austrian *crème de la crème* are comprehensible and consistent—folly without a flaw, and rather admirable in its kind as a specimen of human absurdity. . . . I have the honour of being slightly acquainted with E——'s portrait painter. He is a Scotch gentleman, of very great merit as an artist. He was in Rome the winter I was there, and I met him in society, and saw several of his pictures. He was rather injured artistically, I think, by living with mad lords and silly ladies who used to pet and spoil him, which sort of thing damages our artists, who become bitten with the "aristocratic" mania, and destroy themselves as fine workmen in their desire to become fine gentlemen.

There was a story in Rome about Lady C—— and the German princess, Lady D——, going one day to Mr. ——'s studio and finding his fire out, falling down on their own fair knees, and with their own fair hands kindling it again for him. After this, how could he paint anything less than a countess? Jestings apart, however, my dear Hal, the terms Mr. —— asks are

very high; and though he is a very elegant and graceful portrait painter, I would rather, upon the whole, sit to Richmond, whose chalk drawings are the same price, and whose style is as good and more vigorous.

You ask me why Mrs. —, who is undoubtedly a clever woman, is also undoubtedly a silly one?

If I wished to be saucy, which I never do and never am, I should tell you, being an Irishwoman, that it was because she was Irish, and, therefore, capable of a sort of intellectual bull; but, unluckily, though ingenious, this is not true. The sort of ability or abilities, to which we give the ill-defined name of "cleverness," is entirely distinct from common sense, judgment, discretion; so distinct as to be almost their opposite. I think a clever woman requires quite an unusual portion of the above qualities not to be silly, *because* she is clever. This may sound paradoxical, but if you think it worth examining, you will find it true.

I am very cold and very comfortless in these horrible theatres, and shall be glad to get back to King Street, and as soon as I am there will take measures about my readings, which I think I had better begin in earnest with.

There are no rocks on the beach here, like that pretty little reef that runs right out before your windows, but three miles from the shore there is a fatal stretch of sand where wrecks are frequent, and all along which ominous white clouds are springing up from the inky surface of the wintry sea, like warning ghosts. It is very dreary and dismal looking;

but, nevertheless, as I have no rehearsal, I am going out to walk. Kiss Dorothy for me. I am yours and hers most affectionately,

FANNY.

I have had another foolish note from Lady — about "Jane Eyre"—the universal theme of conversation and correspondence,—in which, speaking of herself, she says that she is "*dished, and done for, and gone to the dogs*;" and then accuses the writer of "Jane Eyre" of not knowing how ladies and gentlemen talk—which I think, too; but the above expressions are a peculiar example of refined conventional language, which perhaps the author of that very remarkable book would have hesitated to ascribe to a lady—or a gentleman.

*Birnam Beeches, Sunday, March 20th,
and King Street, Friday, February 1st, 1848.*

Now I have two long letters of yours to answer, and my own opinion is that they will not be answered until I get to the Beeches, and have a few hours breathing time, for I am just now setting off for Cambridge, where I act to-night. To-morrow I travel to Bury St. Edmund's, and act there the same night; and Friday I shall just get to London in time for my dinner, and the next morning I go down to Birnam. . . . The air of St. Leonard's, though you called it cold and sharp, was mild compared with the raw, sunless climate I have since *enjoyed* at Lynn and Yarmouth; a bracing climate always suits me better than a relaxing one. . . . I cannot, however, agree

with you that there is more "excitement" in rehearsing every morning, and sitting in a dull, dirty, hired room, and acting that everlasting "Hunchback" every evening, than in being your mounted escort to Bex Hill and Fairlight church, and reading to you either "Mary Stuart" or "Jane Eyre." I am glad to see that L—— and I agree about what always seems to me the most improbable part of the latter very remarkable book. I am slow in determining in my own mind the course that other women would pursue in exceptionally difficult circumstances; many of them would doubtless display an amount of principle of which I should be quite incapable; and so I am glad that L—— thinks, as I do, that Jane Eyre's safest course would have been to have left Thornfield without meeting her lover's despair.

Fever at the gates of Ardgillan, my dear Hal, must indeed make you anxious; but as your family have moved thence, I suppose they will not return while there is any danger to be apprehended from doing so.

And now, dear Hal, from the Beeches, where I arrived yesterday afternoon, and am now writing to you. . . . I have really kept both cold and cough down wonderfully, considering the horrible weather and exposure I have gone through travelling, and in those damp barns of theatres. Hayes will certainly not recover as soon as I do, for she has all the aversion of her class to physic and spare diet. . . .

Charles Greville is here, and I asked him your question, if he had ever published any other book but the one upon Ireland you are reading. He said no.

He has, however, written pamphlets and newspaper articles of considerable ability upon political subjects. I have been taking a long walk, and will now resume my letter to you. I perceive I have brought Charles Greville and his book into the middle of what I was telling you about those poor young Norwich actors.

A very pretty and charming niece of my dear friend, Mr. Harness, is married and living within a short distance of Lynn, and as I had not time to stay with her now, I have promised to go back into Norfolk to visit her, and at the same time I have promised to act a night for these poor people if they can get their manager's leave for me to do so.

My dear Hal, this letter seems destined to pass its unfinished existence on the railroads. I am now at this present moment finishing it in my King Street lodging, to which I returned yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Grote being seized in the morning with one of her attacks of neuralgia, for which she is obliged to take such a quantity of morphine that she is generally in a state of stupor for four and twenty to thirty hours. The other guests departed in the morning, and I in the afternoon, after giving her medicine to her, and seeing her gradually grow stupid under its effect. Poor woman, she is a wretched sufferer, and I think these attacks of acute pain in her head answerable for some of the singularity of her demeanour and conversation, which are sometimes all but unaccountably eccentric.

You ask me if I saw anything on that bitter cold journey, as I went along, to interest me. You know I am extremely fond of the act of travelling: being carried through new country excites one's curiosity

and stimulates one's powers of observation very agreeably, even when nothing especially beautiful or noteworthy presents itself in the landscape. I had never seen the east counties of England before, and am glad to have become acquainted with their aspect, though it is certainly not what is usually called picturesque. The country between Norwich and Yarmouth is like the ugliest parts of Holland, swampy and barren; the fens of Lincolnshire flat and uninteresting, though admirably drained, cultivated, and fertile. Ely Cathedral, of which I only saw the outside, is magnificent, and the most perfect view of it is the one from the railroad, as one comes from Lynn.

Lynn itself is a picturesque and curious old town, full of remains of ancient monastic buildings. The railroad terminus is situated in a property formerly part of a Carthusian convent, and the wheelwrights and blacksmiths and carpenters' cottages are built partly into the old monkish cells, of which two low ranges remain round a space now covered with sleepers and huge chains, and iron rails, and all the modern materials of steam travel.

Cambridge, of course, I saw nothing of. On the road between it and Bury St. Edmund's one passes over Newmarket heath, the aspect of which is striking, apart from its "associations." Bury St. Edmund's—which is famous, as you know, for its beautiful old churches and relics of monastic greatness—I saw nothing of, but was most kindly and hospitably sheltered by Mr. Donne, who, being now the father of sons, is living in Bury in order to educate them at the school where he and my brothers were as boys under

Dr. Malkin. [William Bodham Donne, my brother John's school and college mate, for more than fifty years of this changeful life the unchanged, dear, and devoted friend of me and mine—accomplished scholar, elegant writer, man of exquisite and refined taste, and such a *gentleman* that my sister always said he was the *original* of the hero of Boccaccio's story of the "Falcon."]

God bless you, my dear. I have a pain in my chest, and bad cough, which don't prevent my being

Yours most truly,

FANNY.

29, King Street, Thursday, 3rd.

It is no longer the bitter cold morning on which you asked me how I was, and now I cannot for the life of me remember how or where I was on that said 26th. Oh, it was last Wednesday, and I was travelling from Lynn to Cambridge, and I was pretty well, and had a pleasant railroad trip, the gentlemen in the railroad carriage with me being intelligent and agreeable men, and one of them well acquainted with my brother John, and all his Cambridge contemporaries. Though it was cold, too, the sun shone, and threw long streaks of brightness across the fens of Lincolnshire, producing effects on the unfrequent and in themselves unpicturesque farmhouses, with their groups of wintry skeleton trees exactly like those in the Dutch pictures, which are, for the most part, representations of just such landscapes.

Mitchell sent me yesterday a box at the French theatre for a morning performance of the "Antigone," with Mendelssohn's choruses. Previous to the per-

formance of the Greek drama, they played, very inappropriately it seems to me, his music of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and the effect of it upon my nerves was such that, though screened by the curtain of the box, and my sobs drowned by the orchestra, I thought I should have been obliged to leave the theatre. It is the first time that I have heard a note of Mendelssohn's music since his death. . . .

How thankful I am I did not attempt that reading at the Palace! What should I have done there, thus convulsed with pain and sorrow, in the midst of those strange people, and the courtly conventions of their condition! Oh, what a bitter, bitter loss to the world, and all who loved him, has been the death of that bright and amiable great genius!

The Greek play was given in the true Grecian fashion, and was interesting and curious as a spectacle. The French literal translation of the grand old tragedy seemed at once stilted and bald, and yet I perceived and felt through it the power of the ancient solemn Greek spell; and though strange and puppet-like in its outward form, I was impressed by its stern and tragic simplicity. It is, however, merely an archæological curiosity, chiefly interesting as a reproduction of the times to which it belongs. To modern spectators, unless they are poets or antiquarians, I should think it must be dull, and so I find it is considered, in spite of Mendelssohn's fine music, which, indeed, is so well allied in spirit to the old tragedy, that to most listeners I dare say it has something of the dreamy dreariness of the drama itself.

Mrs. Jameson was with me, and it was chiefly on

her account that I did not give way to my impulse to leave the theatre.

Good-bye. God bless you, my dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The foregoing letter refers to my having declined to read the "Antigone" at Buckingham Palace, under the following circumstances. My father was desired to do so, but his very serious deafness made his reading anything to which there was an occasional accompaniment of music difficult to him, and he excused himself; at the same time, unfortunately for me, he suggested that I should be applied to to read the play. Accordingly, I received a message upon the subject, but was obliged to decline the honour of reading at the Palace, for reasons which had not occurred to my father when he answered for my accepting the task he had been unable to undertake. I had never yet read at all in public, and to make my first experiment of my powers before the queen, and under circumstances calculated to increase my natural nervousness and embarrassment, seemed hardly respectful to her, and almost impossible to me.

Then, for my first attempt of the kind, to select a play accompanied by Mendelssohn's music, of which I had not heard one bar since the shock of his death, was to incur the almost certain risk of breaking down in an uncontrollable paroxysm of distress, and perhaps being unable to finish my performance.

What I endured at the St. James's Theatre, on the occasion I have spoken of in this letter, confirms me

in my conviction, that I couldn't have attempted what was proposed to me with a reasonable chance of being able to fulfil my task.

I was told afterwards that I had been guilty of "disloyal disobedience to a royal command,"—a severe sentence, which I do not think I had deserved, and found it painful to bear.]

King Street, Saturday, February 9th, 1848.

Mrs. Jameson is no longer in the house with me, dearest Hal. She went away the other day from the theatre, where we were hearing Mendelssohn's "Antigone" together, and will probably not return for some time; when she does, I shall most likely be out of town.

I saw Mitchell yesterday, and he entirely declines to have anything whatever to do with my readings—*ainsi me voilà bien!* I cried like a baby the whole of the day afterwards; of course my nerves were out of order, or I should have chosen some less rubbishy cause among the various excellent reasons for tears I have to select from.

Mr. Harness and Charles and Henry Greville came to see me in the course of the day. The latter rather bullied me, said I behaved like a child: and so I certainly did; but, oh, my dear Hal, if you knew how little these, my most intimate friends, know about me, and how much more able and fit they think me to fight and struggle for myself than I am! They are all very kind in suggesting many things: Henry Greville is urgent with me to undertake the speculation of giving readings at my own risk—hiring a room, and sending

out advertisements, etc.; but this I will not do, as I am willing to work hard for very small gains, but not to jeopardy any portion of the small gains for which I have worked hard. Am I right in your opinion and that of dear Dorothy? In the mean time, I have written off to the Secretary of the Collegiate Institution at Liverpool, who proposed to me last year to give readings there, and have told him that I shall be glad to do so now if it still suits the purposes of the Institution. He, however, may have changed his mind, as Mitchell has done; and in that case I must sit down and eat my present savings, and thank God that I have savings for the present to eat. . . .

Dear old Rogers came yesterday, and sat with me some time; and talking over my various difficulties with me, said I had much better go and live with him, and take care of his house for him. It's a pretty house, but I'm afraid it would be no sinecure to be his housekeeper. . . .

How *is* your poor knees and wrists, and all your rheumatical fastenings and hinges, and Dorothy's *intérieur*? I hope she is not tyrannizing over you with unnecessary questions and inquiries, which merely serve to trammel your free-will, by asking you where you have been walking, or if it rained while you were out.

I send you a kiss, which I beg you will give each other for me, or otherwise divide without quarrelling, and believe me

Very affectionately yours,

FANNY.

29, *King Street.*

. . . Oh yes, my dear Hal, I hear abundance of discussion of the present distracted aspect of public affairs, abroad and at home; but for the most part the opinions that I hear, and the counsels that are suggested to meet the evils of the times, seem to me as much indications of the faithlessness and folly of men, as the great movements of nations are of the faithfulness and wisdom of God.

Still, when I hear clever, practical politicians talk, I always listen with keen interest; for the details in which they seem to me too much absorbed, are a corrective to my generalizing tendency on all such subjects.

Moral principles are the *true* political laws (mere abstract truisms, as they are held, and accordingly overlooked, by *working* statesmen) by which the social world is kept in cohesion, just as the physical world is kept in equilibrium by the attracting and repelling forces that control its elements.

You ask me how many letters I am in your debt? When I shall have finished this, only one. I have worked very hard this past week to keep your claims down, but have only just now got my head above water with you.

There was nothing to like at Lynn. The weather was gloomy and cold, and I was only there two days. There seemed to be a good many curious remains of antiquity in and about the town—old churches, houses, gateways, and porches,—but I had no leisure to look at these, and indeed the weather was almost too severe to admit of standing about sight-seeing, even under the warmest zeal for instruction.

I did not find the sea air make me sleep at Lynn. and incline to think that it is you, more than the climate, that affects me so soporifically at St. Leonard's. God bless you, dear.

Your affectionate,
FANNY.

29, King Street, St. James's.

I do not know how right I am in saying Lady — married because she was jilted, inasmuch as of my own personal knowledge I do not *know* it; but that she was much attached to Lord —, whose father would not permit the marriage, I have heard repeatedly from people who knew both the families; and Rogers, who was very intimate with hers, told me that he considered her marrying as she did the result of mere disappointment, saying, "She could not have the man she loved, so she gave herself to the man who loved her." So much in explanation of my rather rash statement about that most beautiful lady I ever saw.

I have seen a good many handsome people, but there was a modesty, grace, and dignity, and an expression of deep latent sentiment in that woman's countenance, that, combined with her straight nymph-like figure, and the sort of chastity that characterized her whole person and appearance, that fulfilled my ideal of female beauty. You will perhaps wonder at my use of the word "chastity," as applied merely to a style of beauty; but "chaste" is the word that describes it properly. Of all the Venuses of antique art, the Venus of Milo, that noble and keenly intellectual goddess of beauty, is the only one that I admire.

The light, straight-limbed Artemis is lovelier to me than the round soft sleepy Aphrodite; and it was to the character of her figure, and the contour of her head and face, that I applied the expression "chaste" in speaking of Lady —. Her sister, who is thought handsomer, and is a lovely creature (and morally and mentally as worthy of that epithet as physically), has not this severely sweet expression, or sweetly stern, if you prefer it, though this implies a shade of volition, which falsifies the application of it. This is what I especially admire in Lady —, who adds to that faultless Greek outline, which in its integrity and justness of proportion seems the type of truth, an eye whose colour deepens, and a fine-textured cheek, where the blood visibly mantles with the mere emotion of speaking and being listened to.

The first time I met her was at a dinner-party at Miss Berry's, before her marriage. She sat by Landseer, and her great admiration for him, and enthusiastic devotion to his fine art, in which she was herself a proficient, lent an interest to their conversation, which exhibited itself in her beautiful face in a manner that I have never forgotten. . . .

You bid me tell you how I am in mind, body, and estate. My mind is in a tolerably wholesome frame, my body not so well, having a cold and cough hanging about it, and suffering a good deal of pain the last few days. My estate is so far flourishing that I brought back a tolerable wage and earnings from my eastern expedition, and so shall not have to sell out any of my small funded property for my daily bread yet a while.

You say that tact is not necessarily insincerity.

No, I suppose not: I must say I suppose, because I have never known anybody, eminently gifted with tact, who appeared to me perfectly sincere. I am told that the woman I have just been writing about, Lady C——, of whom my personal knowledge is too slight to judge how far she deserves the report, never departs from the truth; and yet is so gentle, good, and considerate, that she never wounds anybody's feelings. If this is so, it deserves a higher title than tact, and appears to me a great attainment in the prime grace of Christianity. I have always believed that where love—charity—abounded, truth might, and could, and would abound without offence. Which of the great French divines said, "*Quand on n'est point dans les bornes de la charité, ou n'est bientôt plus dans celles de la vérité*"? It sounds like Fénelon, but I believe it is Bossuet. Tact always appears to me a sort of moral elegance, an accomplishment, rather than a virtue; dexterity, as it were, doing the work of sensibility and benevolence.

I think it likely that Mitchell will call in the course of the morning, and I may still possibly make some arrangement with him about my readings. . . .

I have had a pressing invitation from Mrs. Mitchell, who is staying at Brighton with her boys, to go down there and visit her. It would be very nice if I could go thence to 18, Marina, St. Leonard's, and pay a visit to some other friends of mine. Your lodgings will, however, I fear be full; and then, too, you may not want me, and it is as well not to be too forward in offering one's self to one's dearest friends, for fear of the French "*Thank you*," which with them, civil folk

that they are, means, "No, they'd rather not." With us, it would imply, "Yes, gratefully ;" otherwise, it is, "Thank you for nothing."

Kiss Dorothy for me.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

29, King Street, Sunday, 5th.

I am afraid my pretty plot of coming to you is at an end, and I am afraid all my chances of coming to you are at an end. I wrote you yesterday that I was beginning to be doubtful about my further engagements in London, and was indeed discouraged and troubled at the aspect of my affairs. This morning, however, comes an express from M——, beginning a new negotiation with me, and wanting me to open with Macready at his theatre on the 21st of this month, to act four weeks, and then renew the engagement for four weeks more. . . . I do not wish to depart from the terms I have asked, but am extremely glad of the offer, and hope he will agree to them. I think it probable that he will, because my engagement with Macready has been so much talked about, and he has himself applied to me three several times about it. This puts an end to all visiting-prospects, for Brighton or St. Leonard's, and in March you will be leaving the latter place. This is a sad disappointment, but perhaps Mr. M—— will not, after all, give me my terms, and I ought to be sorrier for that, but I shan't. . . .

I had a visit the other morning from Mr. Blackett —John Blackett. I don't know if I have spoken of

him to you. I met him at Mrs. Mitchell's in Scotland, while I was staying with her at Carolside, and liked him very much. He is a great friend of Dr. Hampden's and of Stanley, Arnold's biographer. He brought me the other day, a volume of sermons by Stanley, of which I have just read the first, and have been delighted with it. How surely does such a spirit as Arnold's beget its own fit successors! . . . I think I have not read anything, since his own Life, that has given me the same deep satisfaction that these sermons of his pupil have. . . .

That music of Mendelssohn's had a horrid effect upon my nerves; I mean the emotion and distress it caused me. I suffered a great deal of pain, and was quite unwell for several days after it. Will it not be a pity if I can't come and be spoilt any more by you and Dorothy at St. Leonard's? It was so pleasant and good for you.

Ever as ever yours,

FANNY.

King Street, Monday, 7th.

I do very very well this morning, my dear Hal: this is in answer to your affectionate inquiry of the 1st; but if you wanted to know then, of course you will want to know just as much now. . . .

My time at the Beeches was not very pleasant to me. The weather was horrible, cold, wet, and dismal; the house is wretchedly uncomfortable; and Mrs. Grote always keeps me in a rather nervous state of breathless apprehension as to what she may say or do next. I cannot talk much, either to her or Charles Greville;

neither of them understands a word that I say. Her utter *unusualness* perplexes me, and his ingrain worldliness provokes me; but I listened with great pleasure to some political talk between Charles Greville, Mr. Grote, and the Italian patriot, Prandi. You know that, fond as I am of talking, I like listening better, when I can hear what I think worth listening to. I was delighted with their clear, practical, comprehensive, and liberal views of the whole state of Europe, especially Italy, so interesting in her present half-roused attitude of returning national vitality. They talked a great deal, too, upon the West India sugar question; and I listened with interest to all they said, struck the whole time with their entirely ignoring the deepest sources whence national troubles and their remedies flow, of which the wisest working politicians and statesmen take apparently (very foolishly) little heed; I suppose they do not acknowledge them, which is why their government and statescraft is so apt to be mere temporary empirical expediency.

I had a very full and lively audience at Cambridge, and remarked with especial satisfaction a young man sitting in the stage box with one of the sweetest countenances I ever saw. I sincerely hope, for his beauty's sake, that he was amused. He reminded me of the line in *King John*, describing the young gentlemen in the English army:—"The lads "with ladies' faces and fierce dragon's spleens." They were very attentive, and very enthusiastic, and I was very well pleased with them, and I hope they were with me. . . .

There is nothing in the supernatural part of "*Jane Eyre*" that disturbs me at all; on the contrary, I

believe in it. I mean, there is nothing in my mode of thinking and feeling that denies the possibility of such a circumstance as Jane Eyre hearing her distant lover call upon her name. I have often thought that the power of intense love might very well work just such a miracle as that. God bless you, dear. Kiss dearest Dorothy for me, and believe me

Ever yours,

FANNY.

20, King Street, Tuesday, 8th.

Yesterday I had plenty of questions to answer in my letter to you; to-day I have not one. . . . My beloved friend, I know that if your power to serve me equalled your desire to do so, I should be borne in the arms of angels, "lest at any time I struck my foot against a stone." But do not, my dearest Harriet, let your love for me forget that faith without which we could neither bear our own trials nor the trials of those we love. "In the great hand of God we all stand," and are fitly cared for by Him, our Father. I should be much ashamed of the sudden flood of cowardice that overwhelmed me two days ago at the difficult and cheerless prospect before me, but that it was, I am sure, the result of nervous disorder, and the jarring I got the other day from that dreadful Antigone.

You know I seldom waste time in blaming myself, and tarry but a brief space in the idle disconsolateness of repentance. I must try to be less weak, and less troubled about my prospects. I wrote you yesterday of the proposal I had received from Mr. Maddox. He made no offer of terms. I have heard nothing further

from him, and augur ill from his silence. I suppose he will not pay me what I ask, and thinks it useless to offer me less. I shall be very sorry for this; but if I find it so, will apply to Mr. Webster, or some other manager, for employment; and if I fail with them, must make a desperate effort about my readings.

But for my sister's entreaty that I would remain here till she returns from Italy, and my own great desire to see her again, I would *confront* the winter passage across the Atlantic, in hopes of finding work in America, and living without using up the little I have already gathered together. But I cannot bear to go before she comes to England. . . . I was surprised by a visit from Lord Hardwicke yesterday; it is years since I have seen him. I knew and liked him formerly, as Captain Yorke. He is as blunt and plain-spoken as ever, and retains his sailor-like manner in spite of his earldom, which he hadn't when I met him last. . . . Henry Greville is coming to tea with me this evening, and I promised to read him my translation of "Mary Stuart." I hope he may like it as well as you did. Lady Dacre was here this afternoon; she has been dreadfully ill, and looks an old woman now, for the first time, at eighty—that is not too soon to begin.

I think I shall take Mr. Maddox's last offer, and if so, dear Hal, farewell to my visit to St. Leonard's. But I am of the poor author's mind, "*Qu'il faut bien qu'on vive,*" and do not suppose that you will answer me *à la Voltaire*, "*Ma foi, je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*"

It is very odd that it should seem so natural to one to live, and so strange to die, since it is what

everybody does. The fact is, habit is the strongest thing in the world; and living is simply the oldest habit we have, and so the strongest.

Good-bye, my dear, and believe me

Respectfully yours,

FANNY.

King Street, St. James's, Thursday, 10th.

. . . Mr. Maddox comes here, and worries my life out with haggling and bargaining, but has not yet agreed to any terms, and I am half distracted with all the various advice tendered me. . . . In the mean time, I am much comforted about my readings; for I received yesterday morning a very courteous letter from the secretary of the Collegiate Institution at Liverpool, offering me twenty guineas a night if I would go down and read there six nights at the end of March. This I shall be thankful to do, if my engagement at the Princess's Theatre falls through, and if it does not I shall hope to be able to accept the Liverpool invitation later in the season. I have had a visit, too, from one of the directors of the Highgate Institute, to beg I would go and read there. They cannot afford to give me more than ten guineas a night, the institute being a small and not very rich one; but of course I do not expect to be paid for reading as I am for acting, and therefore, whenever I can, shall accept the Highgate offer.

These various proposals have put me in heart once more about the possible success of this reading experiment, and I am altogether much comforted at seeing that employment is not likely to fail me, which

I was beginning to fear it might. . . . Of course, if I apply for engagements to managers, I must expect to take their terms, not to make my own,—for beggars must not be choosers, as I learnt long ago; and when I solicit an engagement, I must be prepared to sell myself cheap—and I will. If Maddox won't pay me what I ask, and Webster won't have me at any price, I shall come to you and Dorothy, who, I "reckon," will take me on my own terms: which, in these my days of professional humiliation (not personal humility, you know), is quite kind of you.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

King Street, Friday, 28th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

You will be glad to hear that Mr. Maddox has at length come into my terms. . . . For the next two months this is some anxiety off my mind, and I trust will be off yours for me; and the last two days have shown me that my chance of getting employment, either acting or reading, is likely to last—at any rate till my sister returns, when I shall probably stay with her till my departure for America. . . . I am most thankful that the depression and discouragement under which I succumbed for a while has been thus speedily relieved. It is a curious sensation to have a certain consciousness of power (which I have, though perhaps it is quite a mistaken notion), and at the same time of absolute helplessness. It seems to me as if I had some sort of strength, and yet I feel totally incapable of coping with the small difficulties

of circumstance under which it is oppressed; it's like a sort of wide-awake nightmare. I suppose it's because I am a woman that I am so idiotic and incompetent to help myself.

But when one thinks of it, what a piteous page in the history of human experience is the baffling and defeat of real genius by the mere weight of necessity, the bare exigencies of existence, the need to live from day to day. Think of Beethoven dying, and saying to Hummel, with that most wonderful assertion of his own great gifts, "Pourtant, Hummel, j'avois du génie!"—such transcendent genius as it was too! such pure and perfect and high and deep inspiration! which had, nevertheless, not defended him from the tyranny of poverty, and the petty cares of living, all his life.

Is it not well that people of great genius are always *proud as well as humble*, and that the consciousness of their own nobility spreads, as it were, the wings of an angel between them and all the baseness and barrenness through which they are often compelled to wade up to the lips? Whenever I think of Burns, my heart tightens itself, to use a French expression, for a most painful *physical emotion*. Do you know Schiller's exquisite poem of the "Division of the Earth"? I will send you a translation, if you do not—a rough one I made of it when it was one of my German lessons. My version is harsh and poor enough, but the thoughts are preserved, and *the* thought is worthy of that noble poet. . . .

29, *King Street, Saturday, 12th.*

MY DEAREST HAL,

How many pleasant things I might lament over, *if* I might! I shall not see St. Leonard's again with you. Emily has misunderstood in saying that my engagement at the Princess Theatre does not begin till the 27th; it begins on the 21st, next Monday week, and I shall only just have time to get my wardrobe ready and study Desdemona and Cordelia, which I am asked to play, and re-learn the music of Ophelia, which I have quite forgotten. . . .

I have an engagement offered me in Dublin, and it is rather provoking that I cannot accept it now, for this, I believe, is the height of the gay season there. As it is, I fear I shall not be able to go over there till May; but perhaps then you will go with me, or be there, and that will be some compensation for the less money I shall make.

It's curious all these engagements offering now within these few days: to be sure, it never rains but it pours, so that accounts for it philosophically.

Did I tell you what a nice long visit I had from Thackeray the other day? Oh, have you read that "Vanity Fair" of his? It is wonderful! He was a schoolfellow of my brother John's, you know, and is a very old friend of mine, but I had not seen him for some time. I wrote to ask him for his autograph for Henry Greville, and he wrote me an extremely kind note, and came himself after it, and sat with me a very long time, and was delightful.

Lady Charlotte Greville, who has just removed into a beautiful new house she has arranged for herself,

wrote to say she was coming to town immediately, and hoped I would give my first London reading in her drawing-room. Was not that nice and kind and good-natured of her, dear old lady? But of course I declined, at any rate for the present, as I mean to exhaust my natural enemies, the managers, before I have recourse to my friends, in any way whatever. Kiss Dorothy for me, and don't let her break your spirit with inquisitorial and vexatious supervision of your actions. A timely resistance to friendly tyranny is a great saving of trouble.

Good-bye, you bad dear.

I am yours ever,

FANNY.

[I wish to record a slight anecdote of my friend William Thackeray, which illustrates his great kindness and amiability, his *sweetness* of temper and disposition.

I met him at Miss Berry's at dinner, a few days before he began his course of lectures on the English essayists, and he asked me to come and hear him, and told me he was so nervous about it, that he was afraid he should break down.

I had an engagement which prevented my hearing his first lecture, but I promised him to go and see him at his room before he began it, to cheer him.

He was to lecture at Willis Rooms, in the same room where I read, and going thither before the time for his beginning, found him standing like a forlorn disconsolate giant in the middle of the room, gazing about him. "Oh, Lord," he exclaimed, as he shook

hands with me, "I'm sick at my stomach with fright." I spoke some words of encouragement to him, and was going away, but he held my hand, like a scared child, crying, "Oh, don't leave me!" "But," said I, "Thackeray, you mustn't stand here. Your audience are beginning to come in," and I drew him from the middle of his chairs and benches, which were beginning to be occupied, into the retiring-room adjoining the lecture-room, my own readings having made me perfectly familiar with both. Here he began pacing up and down, literally wringing his hands in nervous distress. "Now," said I, "what shall I do? Shall I stay with you till you begin, or shall I go, and leave you alone to collect yourself?" "Oh," he said, "if I could only get at that confounded thing" (his lecture), "to have a last look at it!" "Where is it?" said I. "Oh, in the next room on the reading-desk." "Well," said I, "if you don't like to go in and get it, I'll fetch it for you." And remembering well the position of my reading-table, which had been close to the door of the retiring room, I darted in, hoping to snatch the manuscript without attracting the attention of the audience, with which the room was already nearly full. I had been used to deliver my reading seated, at a very low table, but my friend Thackeray gave his lectures standing, and had had a reading-desk placed on the platform, adapted to his own very tall stature, so that when I came to get his manuscript it was almost above my head. Though rather disconcerted, I was determined not to go back without it, and so made a half jump, and a clutch at the book, when every leaf of it (they were not fastened

together), came fluttering separately down about me. I hardly know what I did, but I think I must have gone nearly on all fours, in my agony to gather up the scattered leaves, and retreating with them, held them out in dismay to poor Thackeray, crying, "Oh, look, look, what a dreadful thing I have done!" "My dear soul," said he, "you couldn't have done better for me. I have just a quarter of an hour to wait here, and it will take me about that to page this again, and it's the best thing in the world that could have happened." With which infinite kindness he comforted me, for I was all but crying, at having, as I thought, increased his distress and troubles. So I left him, to give the first of that brilliant course of literary historical essays with which he enchanted and instructed countless audiences in England and America.

The last time I saw Thackeray, was at a dinner at my dear friend, Mr. Harness'. As we were about to seat ourselves at table, I being between Mr. Harness and Thackeray, his daughter Annie (now Mrs. Ritchie) was going to place herself on the other side of her father. "No, no," said our dear host, "that will not do. I cannot have the daughter next the father." And Miss Thackeray was invited to take another place. She had just published her story, "The History of Elizabeth," in which she showed herself to have inherited some of the fine elements of her father's literary genius. As we sat down, I said to him, "But it appears very evident, I think, that the daughter is to be *next* to the father." He looked at me for a moment with a beaming face, and then said, "Do you know, I have never read a word of that thing?" "Oh," cried I,

"Thackeray! Why don't you? It is excellent! It would give you so much pleasure!" "My dear lady, I couldn't, I couldn't!" said he with the tears in his eyes. "It would *tear my guts out!*"—which powerful English description of extreme emotion would have startled me less in French or Italian; "*Cela m'arracherait les entrailles,*" or "*mi soiscerelbero.*"

In the evening, he talked back to our early times, and my coming out at Covent Garden, and how, "We all of us," said he (and what a noble company of young brains and hearts they were!), "were in love with you, and had your portrait by Lawrence in our rooms"—which made me laugh and cry, and abuse him for tantalizing me with the ghost of a declaration at that late hour of both our days. And so we parted, and I never met him again. On his way home that evening, his daughter told me that he had spoken kind compassionate words of commendation of me. I have kept them in grateful remembrance. Fine genius! and tender gentle heart! the classic writer of the keenest and truest satire of the social vices of our day; the master of English style, as powerful and pure as that of the best models, whose works he has so admirably illustrated.

"Vanity Fair" will, I suppose, be always considered Thackeray's masterpiece—though everybody loves, beyond all his other portraits, the exquisite one of Colonel Newcome,—but it seems to me that "Esmond" is a more extraordinary literary feat than any other of his works—except, indeed, "Lyndon of Barry Lyndon," which is even a more remarkable production of the same order.]

King Street, Monday, 14th.

If you begin your letter with such questions as "What do you think of me?" I do not know any reason in life, why my answer should ever have an end, even within the liberal limits of the two pages which you extort from me daily. That is a question I cannot answer; although, I must say, I should have expected from you rather more of that constancy and consistency (a male rather than a female quality, however), which, having determined on a certain course as best, does not lament having abided by it when the issue appears unprosperous. I think women are seldom of a sufficiently determined mind to make their opinion or resolution itself their consolation under defeat. They are more liable to mental as well as moral misgivings and regrets than men, and an unfortunate result easily induces them to repent a course they deliberately adopted.

Sole vales Veritas is the motto upon a little pencil-case contained in the small work-case Emily has given me. She had it engraved on the seal, and though it is not altogether so congenial a motto to me as Arnold and Robertson's Christian device "Forward!" (and is moreover axiomatic rather than hortatory), I use it partly for her sake, and partly because it is undeniable.

Pilate wished to know what is truth—or rather pretended that he did,—and I have a very general conviction that "What is truth?" is the speech of Pilate to this day; *i.e.* of those who know, but will not do, what they know to be right. It is very seldom, indeed, that the mind earnestly desires a conviction,

strives for one, prays for one, and labours to attain one, that it does not acquire what, to all intents and purposes, *is* truth for that individual soul.

God's perfect and absolute Truth remedies in a thousand ways the defectiveness of the partial truth that we arrive at; and so that the *endeavour* after truth be true, the highest result of all is reached, *truth towards God*, though, humanly speaking, the mental result may be a failure. What *absolute truth* is, my dearest Hal, you will certainly not know before you die, and possibly not then. In the mean time, I take it, you have, or may have if you will, that which will serve your turn. At any rate, I have,—which is not at all the same thing—but that don't signify.

I am very glad I was welcome in Bedford Place, and that Miss —— was good enough to be pleased with me.

There is great goodness in her voice and manner, and to have kept her face unwrinkled, and her hair unblanched till the present age (as it is no result of selfish insensibility in her), bespeaks a virtuous life, and sweet serene temper.

I wonder more women to whom their good looks are precious, do not ponder upon the *beauty* of holiness. . . . I have not heard from Adelaide or E—— for some time, but of them, that they and the children are well; that she is in good looks, and admirable voice; that their house is the pleasantest in Rome, and their parties *the thing* to which everybody is anxious to be admitted: so all is prosperous and pleasant with them. I have told you of her nice new house in Eton Place.

It is in a considerable state of forwardness, the bedrooms being all papered, and the drawing-rooms nearly painted. Henry Greville has had it all done for her, and in very good taste; the grates are all up, and I should think in another fortnight they might take possession if they were here.

I have read more of Stanley's sermons, and am struck with their resemblance, in tone and spirit, to that book of my friend Mr. Furness, which I do not know if I ever gave you to read, called, "Jesus and His Biographers."

Stanley's sermons are excellent, but they seem to me curiously unorthodox. There is an inletting of new views upon the subject of the Christian Revelation, against which the Protestantism of the Church of England—in many respects illogical and anomalous, as it appears to its opponents—will have to fight a hard and difficult battle.

Lady Ellesmere was absolutely in despair about the bill for admitting the Jews to Parliament, and had influence enough with Lord Ellesmere to make him vote against it. This is sad enough; but she is so excellent that her influence over him, in one case where it is bad is good in a great many others. . . .

God bless you, my dear. Give my love to Dorothy: I am both yours, but yours more particularly,

FANNY.

P.S. My course with regard to my engagement at the Princess Theatre was determined by my father's opinion, and confirmed by the advice of all my friends who spoke to me upon the subject—Emily, Harness,

the Grevilles, and others; and all that Mr. Maddox said in his various conversations with me upon the subject, enabled the best experienced among us to form a very fair idea of what he could afford to give, and what I was justified in asking.

29, King Street, Friday, February 18th, 1848.

I have been this morning to a rehearsal of *Macbeth*, at which Macready did not attend; so that in point of fact, as far as I was concerned, it was *nil*. He is, I believe, finishing some country engagements, and I suppose had not returned to town. I have another rehearsal to-morrow, at which it is to be hoped he will attend, as otherwise my being there is really quite a work of supererogation.

My men friends—among whom I include my father—one and all, did what I think women would not have done. The minute Mr. Maddox agreed to the terms I had demanded, lamented bitterly (even my dear Mr. Harness—who is a good man) that I had not stood out for higher ones, feeling quite sure I should have got them. Now, this I think quite as contemptible, and a great deal more dishonest, than the womanly process (*Emily's* and yours) of lamenting that I had not taken less than I had demanded, because you feared my doing so had broken off the negotiation altogether. I think, upon the whole, it behoves people to know what they mean, and to abide by it, without either weak regrets at an ill result, or selfish ones that it is not better than what one had made up one's mind to—when it seems that it might have been so. I do wish people would learn to be

like my aunt's cook, and "stand upon their own bottom, with fortitude and similarity." (A woman that Mrs. Siddons was engaging as cook, replied to the question, "Can you make pastry?" "Well, no, ma'am—not exactly to say, the very finest of pastry. I can make plain puddings and pies, but—I am not a professed puff pastry cook, and I think it best to say so, as every one should stand upon their own bottom, with fortitude and similarity, I think.")

I act Lady Macbeth on Monday, on Wednesday Queen Katharine, and on Friday Desdemona, for the first time in my life. I have a beautiful and correct dress for her (you know I always liked my clothes), for which, nevertheless, I expect to be much exclaimed against, as our actresses have always thought proper to dress her in white satin. I have arrayed her in black (the only habit of the noble Venetian ladies) and gold, in a dress that looks like one of Titian's pictures.

That smothering scene, my dear Harriet, is most extremely horrible, and like nothing in the world but the catastrophe of poor Madame de Praslin. I think I shall make a desperate fight of it, for I feel horribly at the idea of being murdered in my bed. The Desdemonas that I have seen, on the English stage, have always appeared to me to acquiesce with wonderful equanimity in their assassination. On the Italian stage they run for their lives round their bedroom, Pasta in the opera (and Salvini in the tragedy, I believe), clutching them finally by the hair of the head, and then murdering them. The bedgown in which I had arrayed Desdemona for the night would

hardly have admitted of this flight round the stage; besides that, Shakespeare's text gives no hint of any such attempted escape on poor Desdemona's part; but I did think I should like not to be murdered, and therefore, at the last, got up on my knees on my bed, and threw my arms tight round Othello's neck (having previously warned Mr. Macready, and begged his pardon for the liberty), that being my notion of the poor creature's last appeal for mercy.

What do you think of our fine ladies amusing themselves with giving parties, at which they, and their guests, take chloroform as a pastime? Lady Castlereagh set the example, and was describing to me her sensations under the process. I told her how imprudent and wrong I thought such experiments, and mentioned to her the lecture Brand gave upon the subject, in which the poor little guinea-pig, who underwent his illustrations for the benefit of the audience, died on the table during the lecture; to which she replied, "Oh yes; that she knew that, *for she was present.*" Can you conceive, after such a spectacle, trying similar experiments upon one's ignorant self? Is it not very brave? or is it only idiotical? . . .

I have been making a desperate struggle, *giving my reasons* (four pages of them—think of it!) to the committee of the Liverpool Institution, to induce them to let me read Shakespeare *straight through* to them; at least, each play I read, divided into two readings, and with only the omissions required by modern manners: but I fear they will not let me. I shall be grievously disappointed. . . .

Was there ever such a to-do as that woman Lola Montes is kicking up? Everybody is turning Catholic as fast as possible, and the good Churchwomen are every way in despair. They already see their sons all circumcized, and their daughters refusing to eat ham, and their brothers and husbands confessing the Real Presence. The lady members of the Established Church, especially the more serious ones, are in great tribulation at all that is going on. Lady Ellesmere is desperate at the Jews coming into Parliament, and Lord Ellesmere has voted against them. He, poor man, has been, within the last few days, all but at death's door with the gout, and perhaps near finding out how different, or *indifferent* these differences *really* are. It is wonderful to hear everybody talk.

Good-bye. I am yours and Dorothy's

Most respectfully,

FANNY.

[My first intention in undertaking my readings from Shakespeare was to make, as far as possible, of each play a thorough study in its entirety; such as a stage representation cannot, for obvious reasons, be. The dramatic effect, which of course suffers in the mere delivery from a reading-desk, would, I hoped, be in some measure compensated for by the possibility of retaining the whole beauty of the plays as poetical compositions. I very soon, however, found my project of making my readings "studies of Shakespeare" for the public quite illusory.

To do so would have required that I should take two, and sometimes three, evenings to the delivery of

one play ; a circumstance which would have rendered it necessary for the same audience, if they wished to hear it, to attend two and three consecutive readings ; and in many other respects I found the plan quite incompatible with the demand of the public, which was for a dramatic entertainment, and not for a course of literary instruction.

My father had found it expedient, in this mode of illustrating Shakespeare, to make one play the subject of each reading ; taking two hours for the performance, and dividing the piece as fairly as possible in two parts ; retaining the whole *story* of the play, and so much only of the wisdom and beauty, bestowed on its development by the author, as could be kept well within the two hours' delivery, and make the reading resemble as nearly as possible, in dramatic effect, the already garbled and coarsely mutilated stage plays the general public are alone familiar with. I was grievously disappointed, but could not help myself. In Germany I should have had no such difficulty ; but the German public is willing to take its amusements in earnest.

The readings were to be my livelihood, and I had to adapt them to the audiences who paid for them :—

“ For those who live to please, must please to live.”

I gladly availed myself of my father's reading version of the plays, and read those he had delivered, cut and prepared for the purpose according to that. When I came to cut and prepare for reading the much greater number which I read, and he did not, I found the task a very difficult one ; and was struck with the

judgment and taste with which my father had performed it. I do not think it possible to have adapted these compositions better, or more successfully to the purposes for which he required them. But I was determined, at least, not to limit my repertory to the few most theatrically popular of Shakespeare's dramas, but to include in my course *all* Shakespeare's plays that it was possible to read with any hope of attracting or interesting an audience. My father had limited his range to a few of the most frequently acted plays. I delivered the following twenty-four : King Lear, Macbeth, Cymbeline, King John, Richard II., two parts of Henry IV., Henry V., Richard III., Henry VIII., Coriolanus, Julius Cæsar, Anthony and Cleopatra, Hamlet, Othello, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, The Winter's Tale, Measure for Measure, Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It, Midsummer Night's Dream, Merry Wives of Windsor, and The Tempest.

These plays I read invariably through once before repeating any of them ; partly to make such of them as are seldom, or never acted, familiar to the public, by delivering them alternately with those better known ; and partly to avoid, what I much dreaded, becoming mechanical or hackneyed myself in their delivery by perpetual repetition of the same pieces, and so losing any portion of the inspiration of my text by constant iteration of those garbled versions of it, from which so much of its nobler and finer elements are of hard necessity omitted in such a process as my reading of them. I persisted in this system for my own "soul's sake," and not to debase my work more than

was inevitable, to the very considerable detriment of my gains.

The public *always* came in goodly numbers to hear "Macbeth," "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," and "The Merchant of Venice;" and Mendelssohn's exquisite music, made an accompaniment to the reading of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," rendered that a peculiarly popular performance. But to *all* the other plays the audiences were considerably less numerous, and to some few of them I often had but few listeners. Mr. Mitchell, who for a considerable length of time *farmed* my readings, protested bitterly against this system, which involved, of course, less profits than he might have made by repeating only the most popular plays; and my own agents, when I was reading on my own account, did not fail to represent to me that I was what they called sacrificing my interests, *i.e.* my receipts, to this plan of operations; but man does not live by bread alone, and for more than twenty years that I followed the trade of a wandering rhapsodist, I never consciously sacrificed my sense of what was due to my work, for the sake of what I could make by it. I have wished, and hoped, and prayed, that I might be able to use my small gift *dutifully*; and to my own profound feeling of the *virtue* of these noble works, have owed whatever power I found to interpret them. My great reward has been, passing a large portion of my life in familiar intercourse with that greatest and best English mind and heart, and living almost daily in that world above the world, into which he lifted me. One inspiration alone could have been purer or higher; and to that, my earthly master's work, done as

well as it was in me to do it, often helped, and from it, never hindered me.]

29, King Street, Saturday, February 19th.

Imprimis, will you and Dorothy fasten your dinner-napkins with these things, or rings, which I have made for you? for my imagination is sick with the memory of those bits of strings you use. I have made these too short, and so have been obliged to put strings to them, having originally intended them to be complete rounds; but my needle performances are always ill-managed and untidy, and as such I commend these to your indulgent acceptance. I wrought at them those bitter evenings that I spent in those barns of theatres in Norfolk, where the occupation contributed to entertain the warmth of my heart, which was all the heat I had to keep me alive. . . .

I must tell you rather a droll observation of the worthy Hayes. When I explained to her that I had made those worsted bands to fasten your dinner-napkins, for which you had nothing but strings, she said, "Dear me! I wonder at that! And Miss S—— seemed so fond of clever, curious contrivances, for everything." I screamed with delight when she said that, for hadn't I cursed that "curious contrivance" of an inkstand you gave me (Dorothy cursed hers too, no doubt, after her own blessed fashion)? and didn't I curse that execrable "curious contrivance" of a taper you gave me at St. Leonard's, with which I was so enchanted *before I used it*, and which wasted me by its own small fire every time I did use it, and for the final burning out of which I was so thankful. But are not Hayes's comments on your character comical?

I am sorry to say I have not the same dressing-room I had before at the Princess's Theatre. Mr. Macready is quite too great a man to give it up to anybody, and my attiring apartment now is up a steep flight of stairs, which is a great discomfort to me on several grounds, for I fear the call-boy will hardly come so far out of his way to summon me, and I shall have to sit in the green room, which, however, I won't, if I can by any means avoid it; but the proximity of the other room to the stage, and its being on the same level with it, was a great advantage. . . .

I am going to dine with Lady Grey (the Countess, widow of *the* Lord Grey), and after that to the opera with Henry Greville and Alfred Potocki, who have a box, and have given me a ticket, which I am very glad of.

I had a three hours' rehearsal this morning, and Macready was there. As far as I could judge, he was less unfair in his mode of acting than I had been led to expect. To be sure, at night, he may stand two yards behind me while I am speaking to him, as I am told he often does. He is not courteous or pleasant, or even well-bred; remains seated while one is standing talking to him; and a discussion having arisen as to the situation of a table, which he wished on the stage, and I wished removed, he exhibited considerable irritability and ill-humour.

He is unnecessarily violent in acting, which I had always heard, and congratulated myself that in Lady Macbeth, I could not possibly suffer from this; but was much astonished and dismayed when at the exclamation, "Bring forth men-children only," he seized me ferociously by the wrist, and compelled me

to make a demivolte, or pirouette, such as I think that lady did surely never perform before, under the influence of her husband's admiration.

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[I have always had a cordial esteem and respect for Mr. Macready's character, which has been increased by reading the record he has himself left of his life. Of his merits as an actor, I had not a very high opinion, though in one or two parts he was excellent, and in the majority of the tragical ones he assumed, better than his contemporaries, my father, Charles Young, and Charles Kean. He was disqualified for sentimental tragedy by his appearance, and he was without comic power of any kind. *Parts* of his *Macbeth*, *Lear*, *Othello*, and *King John*, were powerful and striking, but his want of musical ear made his delivery of Shakespeare's blank verse defective, and painful to persons better endowed in that respect. It may have been his consciousness of his imperfect declamation of blank verse that induced him to adopt what his admirers called, the natural style of speaking it; which was simply chopping it up into prose—a method easily followed by speakers who have never learned the difference between the two, and that blank verse demands the same care and method that music does, and when not uttered with due regard to its artificial construction, and rules of rhythm and measure, is precisely as faulty as music sung out of time.

The school of "natural speaking" reached its

climax, I presume, in the performance of a charming young actress, of whose delivery of the poetry of Portia it was said in high commendation, by her admirers, that she gave the blank verse so *naturally*, that it was impossible to tell that it was not *prose*. What she did with Shakespeare's *prose* in the part, these judicious critics did not mention.

Mr. Macready's eye was as sensitive and cultivated as his ear was the reverse. He had a painter's feeling for colour and grouping and scenic effect; was always picturesque in his appearance, dress, attitudes, and movements; and all the pieces that were put upon the stage under his supervision were admirable for the appropriate harmony of the scenery, decorations, dresses, and whole effect; they were carefully accurate, and extremely beautiful. "Acis and Galatea," as produced under his direction, was one of the most exquisite dramatic spectacles I ever saw, in spite of the despair to which he reduced the chorus and ballet nymphs, by rigorously forbidding all padding, bustle, crinoline, or other artificial adjunct to their natural graces, in the severely simple classical costume of the Greek mythological opera.

Mr. Macready's great parts were Virginius, in Knowles's play of that name; Werner, in Lord Byron's romantic drama; and Rob Roy, in the melodrama taken from Scott's novel. These were original performances, in which nobody has surpassed or equalled him; genuine artistic creations, which, more than his rendering of Shakespeare's characters, entitled him to his reputation as a great actor.

He was unpopular in the profession, his temper

was irritable, and his want of consideration for the persons working with him, strange in a man of so many fine qualities. His artistic vanity and selfishness were unworthy of a gentleman, and rendered him an object of dislike and dread to those who were compelled to encounter them.

He was quite aware of this himself, for once, when he came to see me, while the negotiation was pending about my engagement to act with him, he alluded to his own unpopularity, said he was sure I had heard all sorts of disagreeable stories about him, but assured me, laughing, that "the devil was not nearly so black as he was painted."

It was quite impossible for me to tell Mr. Macready that I had heard he was *pleasant* to act with, remembering, as I did while he spoke to me, the various accounts I had received of actors whose eyes had been all but thrust out by his furious fighting in Macbeth; of others, nearly throttled in his paternal vengeance on Appius Claudius; of actresses, whose arms had been almost wrenched out of their sockets, and who had been bruised black and blue, buffeted alike by his rage and his tenderness. One special story I thought of, and was dying to tell him, of one pretty and spirited young woman, who had said, "I am told Mr. Macready, in such a part, gets hold of one's head, and holds it in chancery under his arm, while he speaks a long speech, at the end of which he releases one, more dead than alive, from his embrace; but I shall put so many pins in my hair, and stick them in in such a fashion, that if he takes me by the head, he will have to let me instantly go again."

My personal experience of Macready's stage temper was not so bad as this, though he began by an act of unwarrantable selfishness in our performance of "Macbeth."

From time immemorial, the banquet scene in "Macbeth" has been arranged after one invariable fashion: the royal dais and throne, with the steps leading up to it, holds the middle of the stage, sufficiently far back to allow of two long tables, at which the guests are seated on each side, in front of it, leaving between them ample space for Macbeth's scene with Banquo's ghost, and Lady Macbeth's repeated rapid descents from the dais and return to it, in her vehement expostulations with him, and her courteous invitations to the occupants of both the tables to "feed, and regard him not." Accustomed to this arrangement of the stage, which I never saw different anywhere in all my life for this scene, I was much astonished and annoyed to find, at my first rehearsal, a long banqueting-table set immediately at the foot of the steps in front of the dais, which rendered all but impossible my rapid rushing down to the front of the stage, in my terrified and indignant appeals to Macbeth, and my sweeping back to my place, addressing on my way my compliments to the tables on either side. It was as much as I could do to pass between the bottom of the throne steps and the end of the transverse table in front of them; my train was in danger of catching its legs and my legs, and throwing it down and me down, and the whole thing was absolutely ruinous to the proper performance of my share of the scene. If such a table had been in any

such place in Glamis Castle on that occasion, when Macbeth was seized with his remorseful frenzies, his wife would have jumped over or overturned it to get at him.

All my remonstrances, however, were in vain. Mr. Macready persisted in his determination to have the stage arranged solely with reference to himself, and I was obliged to satisfy myself with a woman's vengeance, a snappish speech, by at last saying that, since it was evident Mr. Macready's Macbeth depended upon where a table stood, I must contrive that my Lady Macbeth should not do so. But in that scene it undoubtedly did.

As I had been prepared for this sort of thing in Macready, it didn't surprise me; but what did, was a conversation I had with him about "Othello," when he expressed his astonishment at my being willing to play Desdemona; "For," said he, "there is absolutely nothing to be done with it, nothing: nobody can produce any effect in it; and really, Emilia's last scene can be made a great deal more of. I could understand your playing that, but not Desdemona, out of which nothing really can be made." "But," said I, "Mr. Macready, it is Shakespeare, and no character of Shakespeare's is beneath my acceptance. I would play Maria in 'Twelfth Night' to-morrow, if I were asked to do so." Whereupon he shrugged his shoulders, and muttered something about "all that being very fine, no doubt," but evidently didn't believe me; and, as I should have given him credit for my own feeling with regard to any character in Shakespeare's plays, I was as much surprised at his thinking

I should refuse to act any one of them, as I was at his coarse and merely technical acting estimate, of that exquisite Desdemona, of which, according to him, "nothing could be made; *i.e.* no violent stage effect could be produced. Is not Shakespeare's refusing to let Desdemona sully her lips with the coarse epithet of reproach with which her husband brands her, and which no lady in England of his day would have hesitated a moment to use, a wonderful touch of delicacy?

Macready certainly was aware of the feeling of his fellow-actors about his violence, and want of personal self-control on the stage; for as he stood at the side scene by me, in the last act of "King Lear," ready to rush on with me, his Cordelia, dead in his arms, he made various prefatory and preparatory excuses to me, deprecating beforehand my annoyance at being dragged and pulled about after his usual fashion, saying that necessarily the scene was a disagreeable one for the "poor corpse." I had no very agreeable anticipation of it myself, and therefore could only answer, "Some one must play it with you, Mr. Macready, and I feel sure that you will make it as little distressing to me as you can;" which I really believe he intended to do, and thought he did.]

I have received this morning from Liverpool, in answer to my letter about my readings, a very earnest request that I would give *lectures* upon Shakespeare. This I have declined doing, not having either the requisite knowledge or ability, nor the necessary time properly to prepare a careful analysis of the smallest portion of such over-brimming subjects as those plays.

I should like to study again Hazlitt's and Coleridge's comments upon Shakespeare, the former I used to think excellent.

Mrs. Grote herself wrote those stanzas upon Mendelssohn which you saw in the *Spectator*. She urged me vehemently while I was with her at the Beeches, to do something of the kind; but I could not. She then showed me her verses, which please me better now than they did then; for then the painful association of his former existence in that place, and the excitement of his beautiful music, which she plays extremely well, had affected my imagination and feelings so much that I should have found it very difficult to be satisfied with any poetical tribute to him that was not of the very highest order.

She and I walked together to the spot in the beautiful woodland where he had lain down to rest, and where she wishes to erect a monument; and I cannot tell you how profoundly I was touched, as we stood silently there, while the great heavy drops, melting in the winter evening's sunshine, fell from the boughs of the beech-trees like slow tears upon the spot where he had lain.

I have read more of Stanley's "Sermons," and quite agree with you in the difference you draw between them and Mr. Furness's book; the spirit of both is kindred. . . .

I don't know anything about the income-tax. I am getting frightfully behind the times, having read no *Times* for a long time; but as regards income-tax, or any other tax, there is no telling how long one may be free from such galls in America. If they indulge in a

few more such national diversions as this war in Mexico, they will have to pay for their whistle, in some shape or other, and in more shapes than one.

It is deplorable to hear the despondency of all public and political men that I see, with regard to the condition of the country. With the Tories, one has long been familiar with their cries that "the sky is falling:" but now the Liberals, at least those who all their lives have been professing Liberals, seem to think "the sky is falling" too; and their lamentable misgivings are really sad to listen to.

I dined on Saturday at Lady Grey's, with the whole Grey family. Lord Dacre, and all of them, spoke of Cobden and Bright as of another Danton and Mirabeau, likened their corn-law league, and peace protests, to the first measures of the first leaders of the French Revolution; and predicted with woful headshaking a similar end to their proceedings. I do not know whether this is an injustice to the individuals in question, but it seems to me an injustice to the whole people of England collectively, and to their own class, the aristocracy of England, which has incurred no such retribution, but which has invariably furnished liberal and devoted leaders to every step of popular progress—their own father an eminent instance of devotion to it. Such misgivings seem to me, too, quite unjust to the powerful, enlightened, and wealthy class, which forms the sound body of our sound-hearted nation: and equally unjust to those below it, in whom, in spite of much vice, and more ignorance, of poverty and degradation, the elements of evil do not exist in the degree and with the virulence that spawned that hideous mob

of murderers, who became at last the only government of revolutionary France. The antecedent causes have not existed here for such results ; and it is an insult to the whole English people to prophesy thus of it.

[Lord Dacre, because of his devotion to the agricultural interest, as he conceives it, and being himself a great practical farmer, seemed to me at once, at the time of the repeal of the corn laws, to renounce his Liberalism ; and though one of the most enlightened, generous, and broad-minded politicians I have ever known, *till then*, to become suddenly timid, faithless, and almost selfish, in his fear of the consequences of Sir Robert Peel's measures.]

What a fine thing faith in God is, even when one's own individual interests must perish, even though the temporary interests of one's country may appear threatened with adversity ! What an *uncommonly* fine thing it is under such circumstance to do right, and to be able to believe in right doing ! . . . As I listened to the persons by whom I was surrounded, and considered their position and circumstances—their forks and spoons, their very good dinner, and all their etceteras of luxury and enjoyment,—I thought that, having all they have, if they had faith in God and in their fellow-creatures besides, they would have the portion of those who have none of the good things of this world—they would have too much.

Will the days ever come when men will see that *Christ* believed in humanity as none of His followers have ever done since ; that *He*, knowing its infirmity better than any other, trusted in its capacity for good more than any other ? We are constantly told that

people can't be taught this, and can't learn that, and can't do t'other; and *He* taught them nothing short of absolute perfection: "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." Are we to suppose He did not mean what he said?

"I must eat my dinner," as Caliban says, and, therefore, farewell.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

P.S.—I did not impart these sentiments of mine to my fellow-guests at Lady Grey's, but kept them in my bosom, and went to the opera, and saw little Marie Taglioni dance, in a way that clearly shows that she is *la niece de sa tante*, and stands in that wonderful dancer's shoes.

King Street, Wednesday, 23rd, 1848.

The staircase I have to go up to my dressing-room at the Princess's Theatre is one with which you are unacquainted, my dearest Hal, for it is quite in another part of the house, beyond the green room, and before you come to the stage. . . . Not only had I this inconvenient distance and height to go, but the dressing-room appointed for me had not even a fire-place in it; at this I remonstrated, and am now accommodated decently in a room with a fire, though in the same inconvenient position as regards the stage. . . . Mr. Maddox assured me that Macready poisoned every place he went into, to such a degree, with musk and perfumes, that if he were to give up his room to me, I should not be able to breathe in it. With my passion for perfumes, this, however, did not appear to me so

certain; but the room I now have answers my purpose quite well enough. . . .

Macready is not pleasant to act with, as he keeps no specific time for his exits or entrances, comes on while one is in the middle of a soliloquy, and goes off while one is in the middle of a speech to him. He growls and prowls, and roams and foams, about the stage, in every direction, like a tiger in his cage, so that I never know on what side of me he means to be; and keeps up a perpetual snarling and grumbling like the aforesaid tiger, so that I never feel quite sure that he *has done*, and that it is my turn to speak. I do not think fifty pounds a night would hire me to play another engagement with him; but I only say, I don't think, —fifty pounds a night is a consideration, four times a week, and I have not forgotten the French proverb, “Il ne faut pas dire, fontaine, jamais de ton eau je ne boirai.”

I do not know how Desdemona might have affected me under other circumstances, but my only feeling about acting it with Mr. Macready is dread of his personal violence. I quail at the idea of his laying hold of me in those terrible passionate scenes; for in “Macbeth” he pinched me black and blue, and almost tore the point lace from my head. I am sure my little finger will be rebroken, and as for that smothering in bed, “Heaven have mercy upon me!” as poor Desdemona says. If that foolish creature wouldn't persist in *talking* long after she has been smothered and stabbed to death, one might escape by the off side of the bed and leave the bolster to be questioned by Emilia, and apostrophized by Othello; but she will uplift her

testimony after death to her husband's amiable treatment of her, and even the bolster wouldn't be stupid enough for that.

Did it ever occur to you what a witness to Othello's agony in murdering his wretched wife his inefficient clumsiness in the process was—his half smothering, his half stabbing her? *That* man not to be able to kill *that* woman outright, with one hand on her throat, or one stroke of his dagger, how tortured he must have been, to have bungled so at his work!

I wish I was with you and Dorothy at St. Leonard's, instead of struggling here for my life—livelihood, at any rate—with Macready; but that's foolish. He can't *touch* me to-night, that's one comfort, for I am Queen Katharine.

Farewell, believe me

Ever yours most respectfully,

FANNY.

[It was lucky for me, under the circumstances, that my notion of Queen Katharine's relations with Cardinal Wolsey were different from those of a lady whom I saw in the part, who at the end of the scene where he finds her working among her women, affably gave him her hand. Katharine of Arragon would have been more likely (though not likely) to give him her foot.]

King Street, Friday, 23rd.

DEAR HAL,

. . . I had heard a very good summary of D'Israeli's speech from Lord Dacre, the day I dined at

Lady Grey's, and know why he said Cobden was like Robespierre. Here's goodly work in Paris now! What wonderful difficult people to teach, those French are! However, their lesson will, of course, be set them over and over again, till they've learnt it. Henry Greville had a letter from Adelaide the day before yesterday, in which she says that the people had risen *en masse* at Rome, and with the Princes Borghese and Corsini, at their head, had gone to the Quirinal, and demanded of the pope that no ecclesiastic (himself, I suppose, excepted) should have any office in the Government, and the pope *had consented*.

She gave a most comical account of the King of Naples, who, it seems, during the late troubles walked up and down his room, wringing his hands, and apostrophizing a figure of the Virgin with "Madonna mia! Madonna mia! ma che imbroglio che m'ha fatto quel Vicario del figlio tuo!" Isn't that funny!

In a letter, posted this morning, I have told you my general impression of Macready's Macbeth. It is generally good—better than good in parts,—but nowhere very extraordinary. It is a fair, but not a fine, performance of the part.

I cannot believe that he is purposely unjust to his fellow-actors: but he is so absorbed in himself, and his own effects, as to be absolutely regardless of them; which, of course, is just as bad for them, though the *guilt* of his selfishness must be according to its being deliberate or unconscious.

I played the first scene in Lady Macbeth fairly well; the rest hardly tolerably, I think. Macready's

stage arrangements destroyed any possible effect of mine in the banquet scene, and his strange demeanour disturbed and distracted me all through the play. The terrible, great invocation to the powers of evil, with which Lady Macbeth's part opens, was the only thing of mine that was good in the whole performance.

Dear Harriet, I have no time to prepare lectures on Shakespeare, and it makes me smile, a grim, verjuice smile, when you, sitting quietly down there at St. Leonards', propose to me such an addition to my present work. I have been three hours and a half at rehearsal to-day; to-morrow I act a new part; this evening I try on all my new dresses; Saturday I shall be three hours at rehearsal again; and, meantime, I must study to recover Ophelia and her songs, which I have almost forgotten.

A commentary upon Shakespeare deserves rather more leisure and quiet thought than I can now bestow upon it; even such an inadequate one as I am capable of would require much preparatory study, had I the ability which the theme demands, and which no amount of leisure or study would give me. . . . I have been in a state of miserable nervousness for the last two days—in terror during my whole performance of Queen Katharine, lest I should forget the words, and yet, while labouring to fix all my attention upon them, distracted with the constant recurrence of *bits* of Desdemona to my mind, which I fancied I was not perfect in, and then *bits* of Ophelia's songs, which I had forgotten, and have been trying to recover. The mere apprehension of having to sing that music turns

me dead sick whenever I think of it; in short, a perfect nightmare of fright present and future, through which I have had to act every night, *tant bien que mal*, but naturally, *bien plus mal que bien*. . . . I do really believe, as my dear German master used to insist, that people can *prevent themselves* from going mad.

My dearest Harriet, Arnold believed in eternal damnation; and those who do so, must have one very desperate corner in their mind—which, however, reserved for the wicked in the next world, must, I should think, sometimes throw lurid reflections over people and things in this. Whoever can conceive that idea, has certainly touched the bottom of despair. “*Lasciate ogni speme voi ch’entrate*,” and I do not see why those who despair of their fellow-creatures in the next world, should not do so in this. I can do neither—believe in hell hereafter, or a preparation for it here.

I am sorry to say that, yesterday, Mr. Ellis, who sat by me at dinner at Lady Castlereagh’s, said that the poorer class in this country was about to be worse off, presently, than it had been yet; and hoped the example of this new uprising in Paris would not be poisonous to them. It is sad to think how much, how many suffer; but by the mode of talking and going on of those who are well off, and do not suffer, in England, it seems to me as if the condition of the poor must become such as to threaten them with imminent peril, before they will alter either their way of talking or of going on. Poor people all! but the rich are poorest, for they have something to lose, and every-

thing to fear, which is the reverse of the case of the poor.

My staircase at the theatre troubles me but little, and I do not sit in the green room, which would have troubled me much more. My rehearsal of Desdemona tried me severely, for I was frightened to death of Macready, and the horror of the play itself took such hold of me, that at the end I could hardly stand for shaking, or speak for crying; and Macready seemed quite mollified by my condition, and promised not to rebreak my little finger, *if he could remember it*. He lets down the bed-curtains before he smothers me, and, as the drapery conceals the murderous struggle, and therefore he need not cover my head at all, I hope I shall escape alive.

Please tell dear Dorothy that Miss —— called here the day before yesterday, and left Miss B——'s songs for me. They are difficult, beyond the comprehension and execution of any but a very good musician; they show real genius, and a taste imbued with the inspiration of the great masters, Handel and Beethoven. The only one of them that I could sing is the only one that is in the least commonplace, "The Bonnet Blue;" the others are beyond my powers, but I shall get my sister to sing them for me. They are very remarkable as the compositions of so young a woman. Did she write the words as well as the music of "The Spirit of Delight"? [The musical compositions here referred to were those of Miss Laura Barker, afterwards Mrs. Tom Taylor, a member of a singularly gifted family, whose father and sisters were all born artists, with various and uncommon natural endow-

ments, cultivated and developed to the highest degree, in the seclusion of a country parsonage]. . . .

I wish it was "bed-time, Hal," and I was smothered and over!

God bless you, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

King Street, Friday, February 28th.

DEAR HAL,

. . . I got through Desdemona very well, as far as my personal safety was concerned: for though I fell on the stage in real hysterics at the end of one of those horrib'e scenes with Othello, Macready was more considerate than I had expected, did not rebreak my little finger, and did not really smother me in bed. I played the part fairly well, and wish you had seen it. I was tolerably satisfied with it myself, which, you know, I am not often, with my own theatrical performances. . . .

Faith in God, according to my understanding of it, my dearest Hal, implies faith in man; and have we not good need of both just now? You can well imagine the state of perturbation and excitement London is in with these Parisian events. The universal cry and question is, "What is the news?" People run from house to house to gather the latest intelligence. The streets are filled with bawling paper-vendors, amidst whose indistinct vociferations the attractively appalling words, "Revolution! Republic! Massacre! Bloodshed!" are alone distinguishable. The loss of Saturday night's packet between Calais

and Dover, besides the horror of the event itself, is doubly distressing from the intense anxiety felt to receive intelligence of how matters are going on.

Thus far yesterday, dear Hal; but as every hour brings intelligence that contradicts that of the hour before, it is now known that the small boat, going from the shore to the packet, was capsized and lost, and not the steamer itself. Henry Greville belongs to the party of Terrorists, and believes the worst of the worst rumours: but I have just seen his mother, and Lady Charlotte says that Charles is almost enthusiastic in his admiration of the conduct of the French people *hitherto*; but then there is never any knowing exactly how long any fashion, frenzied or temperate, moral or material, may last in France.

In the mean time, the condition of that unfortunate Royal Family is worthy of all compassion, especially the women, who are involved in the retributions of the folly or wickedness of the men they belong to.

It is not known where the Duchesse de Nemours is. Her husband has arrived safely here with one of the children; but neither he, nor any one else, knows what has become of his wife and the other two children. Of the Duchesse d'Orléans and her two babies nothing is known; and Lady Normanby wrote a letter to the Queen, saying that Louis Philippe and the Queen of France were in safety, but, as her letter would be sure to be opened, she could say no more.

Only think of the Princesse Clémentine making her escape from France on board the same packet with her brother, the Duc de Nemours, and neither of them knowing the other was on the same vessel! The

suddenness of the whole catastrophe makes it seem like some outrageously impossible dream. What a troubled dream must that king and queen's life seem to them, beginning and ending in such national convulsions! . . .

I really believe Macready cannot help being as odious as he is on the stage. He very nearly made me faint last night in "Macbeth," with crushing my broken finger, and, by way of apology, merely coolly observed that he really could not answer for himself in such a scene, and that I ought to wear a splint; and truly, if I act much more with him, I think I shall require several splints, for several broken limbs. I have been rehearsing "Hamlet" with him this morning for three hours. I do not mind his tiresome particularity on the stage, for, though it all goes to making himself the only object of everything and everybody, he works very hard, and is zealous, and conscientious, and laborious in his duty, which is a merit in itself. But I think it is rather *mean* (as the children say) of him to refuse to act in such plays as "King John," "Much Ado about Nothing," which are pieces of his own too, to oblige me; whilst I have studied expressly for him, Desdemona, Ophelia, and Cordelia, parts quite out of my line, merely that his plays may be strengthened by my name. Moreover, he has not scrupled to ask me to study new parts, in plays which have been either written expressly only for him, or cut down to suit his peculiar requisitions. This, however, I have declined doing. Anything of Shakespeare's I will act with and for him, because anything of Shakespeare's is good enough, and too

good, for me. . . . I shall have a nausea of fright till after I have done singing in Ophelia to-morrow night.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

King Street, Tuesday, March 7th, 1848.

Indeed, my dear Hal, I was not satisfied, but profoundly dissatisfied with my singing in Ophelia; but am thankful to say that I did not sing out of tune, which I dreaded doing, from the miserable nervousness I felt about it. I am entirely misplaced in the character, and can do nothing with it that might not be better done by almost any younger woman, with a sweet voice, and that order of fair beauty which one cannot separate from one's idea of Ophelia.

I have read Stanley's sermon on St. Peter, and am enchanted with it, and more than ever struck with the resemblance, in its general spirit, and even in actual passages, to my friend Mr. Furness's book. The notes and commentary upon the sermon are the part of Stanley's work that show more erudition and literary power than Mr. Furness's treatise contained, but the manner and matter of the writers shows close kindred when treating of the same subjects.

We overflow here with anecdotes of the hair-breadth escapes of the French fugitives. Guizot, and Madame de Liéven, his dear friend and evil genius, arrived both in London on the same day, having travelled from Paris in the same railroad train as far as Amiens; she, with the painter Roberts, passing as his wife, and Guizot so disguised that she did not

recognize him, and would not believe Lord Holland, when he called upon her on Saturday, and told her that Guizot had arrived like herself, and by the same train, the day before. Hotels and private houses are thronged with French and English tumbling over, a perfect stampede, from the other side of the Channel. Lady Dufferin, who during her long stay in Paris made many French friends, is exercising hospitality to the tune of having thirty people in her house in Brook Street.

Charles Greville showed me on Saturday a capital letter of Lord Clarendon's, upon the subject of his Kingdom [he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at this time], and the probable and possible effects of this French Revolution on your quiet, orderly, well-principled countrymen. He also showed me a letter he had received from E—— from Rome, in which, I think, the account of the pope is that of a man being carried off his legs by the popular exigencies, which he *cannot* resist and at the same time remain pope—the head of the priestly Roman Catholic Government.

Yesterday came news that *Metternich had resigned*. If this is true, the forward step Italy is about to take, need not, please God! be made in blood and violent social upheaving. I do pray that this news may be true, for it will probably avert a fire and sword revolution in the Milanese, and all through Lombardy, in which Piedmont would sympathize too warmly for its own peace and quiet.

Austria, thus deserted by the presiding genius of her hitherto Italian policy, Metternich, will perhaps hesitate to enforce its threatened opposition to the

changes which she might have sold at the cost of many lives, but would not have averted, though she overran Italy from end to end with war and desolation.

This retreat of the great political powers of darkness before the advance of freedom in Italy seems to me like a personal happiness to myself. I rejoice unspeakably in it. It is quite another matter in France. It will be another matter here, whenever our turn to be turned upside down or inside out comes.

In Italy the people are rising against foreign tyranny, to get rid of foreign dominion, and to get rightful possession of the government of their own country. In France the revolution against power is passed, but that against property is yet to come. As for us, our revolt against iniquitous power ended with the final expulsion of the Stuarts; but we have sundry details of that wholesale business yet to finish, and there will be here some sort of *property* revolution, in some mode or other yet.

The crying sin of modern Christian civilization, the monstrous inequalities in the means of existence, will yet be dealt with by us English, among whom it is more flagrant than anywhere else on earth.

It is the one revolution of which our social system seems to me to stand in need, the last that can be directly affected, if not effected, by legislative action upon the tenure of land, the whole system of proprietorship of the soil, the spread of education, and the extension of the franchise: and, as we are the richest and the poorest people in the world, as the extremes of rampant luxury and crawling poverty are

wider asunder here than anywhere else on earth, the force must be great—I pray God it may be gradual—that draws those opposite ends of the social scale into more humane nearness.

I cannot believe that any violent convulsions will attend inevitable necessary change here; for, in spite of the selfish passions of both rich and poor, our people do fear God, more, I think, than any other European nation, and recognize a law of duty; and there is good sense and good principle enough in all classes, I believe, to meet even radical change, with firmness and temperance.

The noble body politic of England is surely yet so sound and healthy and vigorous as to go through any crisis for the cure of any local disease, any partial decay, without danger to the whole; though not, perhaps, without difficulty and suffering both to classes and individuals.

God is over all, and I do not believe that one of the most Christian of nations will perish in the attempt to follow the last of Christ's commandments, "Love one another."

I am painfully impressed with what constantly seems to me the short-sightedness of the clever worldly-wise people I hear talking upon these subjects, and the deep despondence of those who see a great cloud looming up over the land. Our narrow room and redundant population make any sudden violent political movement dangerous, perhaps; but I have faith in the general wholesome spirit of our people, their good sense and good principle. I have the same admiration for and confidence in our national

character that I have in the institutions of the United States.

God keep this precious England safe! . . .

I am ever yours most truly,

FANNY.

King Street, Wednesday, March 8th, 1848.

My little finger has recovered from Macready. It is gradually getting much better, but he certainly did it an injury. With regard to his "relenting," he is, I am told, quite uncommonly gracious and considerate to me. . . .

I was told by a friend of mine who was at "Hamlet" the other evening, that in the closet scene with his mother he had literally knocked the poor woman down who was playing the Queen. I thought this an incredible exaggeration, and asked her afterwards if it was true, and she said so true that she was bruised all across her breast with the blow he had given her; that, happening to take his hand at a moment when he did not wish her to do so, he had struck her violently and knocked her literally down; so I suppose I may consider it "relenting" that he never yet has knocked me down. . . .

We are quite lively now in London with riots of our own—a more exciting process than merely reading of our neighbours' across the Channel. Last night a mob, in its playful progress through this street, broke the peaceful windows of this house. There have been great meetings in Trafalgar Square these two last evenings, in which the people threw stones about, and

made a noise, but that was all they did by all accounts. They have smashed sundry windows, and the annoyance and apprehension occasioned by their passage wherever they go is very great. Nothing serious, however, has yet occurred; and I suppose, if the necessity for calling out the military can be avoided, nothing serious will occur. But if these disorderly meetings increase in number and frequency the police will not be sufficient to moderate and disperse them, and the troops will have to be called out, and we shall have terrible mischief, for our soldiers will not fraternize with the London mob, the idea of duty—of which the French soldiers or civilians have but a meagre allowance (glory, honour, anything else you please, in abundance)—being the *one* idea in the head of an English soldier and of most English civilians, thank God!

The riots in Glasgow have been very serious; the population of that city, especially the women, struck me as the most savage and brutal looking I had ever seen in this country; and I remember frequently, while I was there, thinking what a terrible mob the lowest class of its inhabitants would make.

Metternich's resignation, of which I wrote you yesterday is, alas! uncertain. I had rejoiced at it for the sake of that beautiful Italy, and all her political martyrs past and to come.

Good-bye, God bless you. I shall go and see some of those great mobs of ours. It must be a curious and interesting spectacle.

Believe me ever yours,

FANNY.

*King Street, Saturday and Sunday,
March 11th and 12th, 1848.*

DEAREST HAL,

The "uses of adversity," which are assuredly often "sweet," should help to reconcile us both to our own sorrows and those which are sometimes harder to bear, the sorrows of those we love. . . . I have not yet been able to accomplish my intention of seeing anything of our great political mobs; and they are now beginning to subside, having been rather *rackets* than riots in their demonstrations, I am happy to say, and therefore not very curious or interesting in any point of view.

But there is to be a very large meeting at Kennington on Monday, and Alfred Potocki said he would take me to it, but as I have to act that night I am afraid it would be hardly conscientious to run the risk of an accidental blow from a brickbat that might disable me for my work, which is my duty, though, I confess, it is a great temptation. My friend Comte Potocki is young and tall and strong and active, but I would a great deal rather have paid a policeman to look after me, as I did when I went to see a fire, than have depended upon the care of a gentleman who would feel himself hampered by having me to care for. After all, I shall probably give it up, and not go. . . .

My father tells me he has definitely renounced all idea of reading again, so I took heart of grace to ask him to lend me the plays he read from, to mark mine by. The copy he used is a Hanmer, in six large quarto volumes, and belongs to Lane, the artist, who

has very kindly lent it to me. My father's marks are most elaborate, but the plays are cruelly sacrificed to the exigencies of the performance—as much maimed, I think, as they are for stage representation. My father has executed this inevitable mangling process with extreme good judgment and taste; but it gives me the heart-ache, for all that. But he was *timed*, and that impatiently, by audiences who would barely sit two hours in their places, and required that the plays should be compressed into the measure of their intellectual *short-suffering* capacity.

However, it was at the Palace that he had to *compress* or rather *compel* the five acts of “Cymbeline,” into a reading of three quarters of an hour: and how he performed that feat is still incomprehensible to me. . . .

Everything is black and sad enough as far as I can see, but, thank God, I cannot see far, and every day has four and twenty hours, and in every minute of every hour live countless seeds of invisible events. I heard a very good sermon to-day upon Christian liberty, and have been reading Stanley's sermon upon St. Paul, which made my heart burn within me. . . . I am reading an immensely thick book by Gioberti, one of the Italian reformers, a devout and eloquent Catholic priest, and it enchants me.

Good-bye, my dear,

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

King Street, Wednesday, 16th, 1848.

Of course you have heard of the murder of the soldier by that poor girl in the park. I have heard

nothing more special about it, and have not seen the newspapers lately, so you probably know more about it than I do. Emily tells me this morning that there were some excellent observations upon the circumstance, either in the *Examiner* or *Spectator*. It will be long before women are justly dealt with by the social or civil codes of Christian communities to which they belong, longer still before they are righteously dealt with by the individuals to whom they belong; but it will not be *for ever*. With the world's progress that reform will come, too; though I believe it will be the very last before the millennium.

I hope this poor unfortunate will be recommended to the queen's mercy, and escape hanging, unless, as might be just possible, she prefers depending on a gibbet to the tender mercies of Christian society—especially its women—towards a woman who, after being seduced by a man, murdered him.

Did I never tell you of that unhappy creature in New York, who was in the same situation, except that the villain she stabbed did not die, who was tried and acquitted, and who found a shelter in Charles Sedgwick's house, and who, when the despairing devil of all her former miseries took possession of her, used to be thrown into paroxysms of insane anguish, during which Elizabeth [Mrs. Charles Sedgwick] used to sit by her and watch her, and comfort her and sing to her, till she fell exhausted with misery into sleep? That poor woman used to remind me of my children's nurse. . . .

I receive frequent complaints, not from you only, that I do not write sufficiently in detail about myself. It is on that account that I am always so glad to be

asked questions, because they remind me of what my friends specially desire to know about me when otherwise I should be apt to write to them about what interested me, rather than what I was doing or saying, and the things and people that surround me, which I do not always find interesting.

You do just the same; your letters are very often indeed discussions upon matters of abstract speculation rather than tidings of yourself—your doing, being, or suffering,—and I have not objected to this in you, though it has given me a deal of trouble in answering you, because I like people to go their own way in everything; moreover, unless I am reminded by questions of what *is happening to me*, it interests me so little that I should probably forget to mention it. . . .

If my faith, dearest Hal, depended upon my knowledge of the means by which the results in which I have faith will be achieved, I should have some cause for despondency. Do you suppose I imagine that the sudden violence of a national convulsion will make people Christians, who are not so? . . . My answer to all your questions as to how momentous changes for the better are to be brought about in public affairs, in popular institutions, in governments, can only be—I do not know. I believe in them, nevertheless, for I believe in God's law, and in Christ's teaching of it, and the obviously ordained progress of the human race. True it is that Christ's teaching, ruling in every man's heart, can only be the distant climax of this progress; but when that does so rule, all other "governments," will be unnecessary: but though we are far enough off from that yet, we are nearer than

we ever yet have been ; and until that has become the supreme government of the world, changes must go on perpetually in our temporary and imperfect institutions, by which the onward movement is accelerated, at what speed who can tell ? It seems to me that the geological growth of our earth has been rapid, compared to the moral growth of our race ; but so it is apparently ordained. Individual goodness is *the* great power of all,—societies, organizations, combinations, institutions, laws, governments, act from the surface downwards far less efficaciously, that from the *root upwards*, and what it does *is done*.

Comparatively cheap forms of government are among the most obvious and reasonable changes to be desired in Europe ; but you mistake me if you suppose I am looking for instantaneous Utopias born out of national uproar and confusion. But as long as the love of God is not a sufficiently powerful motive with the nations of the earth to make them seek to know and do His will, revolution, outrage, carnage, fear, and suffering are, I suppose, the spurs that are to goad them on to *bettering* themselves ; and so national agonies seem to me like individual sorrows—dispensations sent to work improvement.

Fourierism was received with extreme enthusiasm in New England, where various societies have been formed upon the plan of Fourier's suggestions, and this, not by the poor or lower classes, but by the voluntary association of the rich with the poor in communities where all worldly goods were in common, and labour too, so foolishly fairly in common, that delicately bred and highly educated women took their turn to stand

all day at the wash-tub, for the benefit of the society, though surely not of their shirts.

I have conversed much in America with disciples of this school, but am of opinion, in spite of their zeal, that no such scheme of social improvement will be found successful, and that this violent precipitating one's self from the sphere in which one is placed in the scale of civilization is not what is wanted, but much rather the full performance of our several duties at the post where we each of us stand, and have been providentially placed. The old English catechism of Christian obligation taught us that we were to do our duty in that state of life into which it had pleased God to call us—and if we did, there would be small need of revolutions.

In America, these social experiments were perfectly disinterested and undertaken for the sake of moral good results; for where they were tried, there was neither excessive wealth nor poverty to suggest them, and the excellent and intelligent people thus brought together by pure zeal for social improvement disagreed and grumbled with each other, were so perfectly and uncomfortably unsuccessful in their experiments that their whole scheme collapsed, and dissolved into the older social disorders from which they had thought to raise themselves and others. . . .

MY DEAR HAL,

. . . I do not see why a much greater subdivision of land would not be beneficial in England. Of course, if to the example of America you retort all its singular and advantageous conditions, I have nothing

to say; but how about Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland? where small proprietorship appears to result in prosperity both to the land and its cultivators. I do not believe that the tenure of land will long continue what it is here, nor do I believe, in spite of the warlike notes of preparation from all sides of the Continent just now, that the day of great standing armies can last much longer—neither in France nor England, surely, can the people consent much longer to be taxed as they are for military purposes. . . .

I told you of my having found, in the theatre at Norwich, a couple of young people whose position had interested me much. They were very poor, but gentlefolks, and sorely as they needed money, I could not offer it to them, so I promised to go down to Lynn, and act for them whenever they could obtain their manager's leave to have me. . . . And on Saturday, the 18th, I shall go down to Mrs. H——'s, my dear friend Harness's niece, who lives within seven miles of Lynn, and visit her, while I do what I can for them.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

*Bilney, near Lynn, Norfolk,
Monday, March 20th, 1848.*

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I may or may not be very nervous on the occasion of my Saturday's reading at Highgate. [It was the first I ever gave—a mere experiment to test my powers for the purpose; was in a small room, and before an audience in which were some of my intimate friends]. It will probably depend upon whether I am

tolerably well or not, but I trust I shall not annoy you, my dear, if you are with me. . . .

Did I tell you that I met Mr. Swinton at Lady Castlereagh's the other evening, and that he very amiably invited me to go and see his pictures before they went to the exhibition, so perhaps we may see them together when we come to town. I had an application from an artist the other day, who is painting a picture from "Macbeth," to sit for his Lady for him; and I have undertaken to do so, which is a bore, and therefore very good-natured of me. . . . This place itself is pretty, though the country round it is not. The weather is cold and rainy and uncomfortable, and I shall be almost glad to get back to London, and to see you. "Now, isn't that strange?" as Benedick says.

I am afraid, moreover, that my errand here, which will cost me both trouble and money, will not answer too well to the poor people I wish to serve. Only think of their manager making them *pay* for the use of the theatre at a rate that will swallow up the best part of what I can bring into it for them. Isn't it a shame? . . . This is an out-of-the-way part of the world enough, as I think you will allow, when I tell you that *one* policeman suffices for *three* parishes, and that his authority is oftenest required to reclaim wandering poultry. Moreover, the curate, who does duty in both this and the adjoining parish for sixty pounds a year, preaches against his patron, whose pew is immediately under the pulpit, designating him by the general exemplary and illustrative title of the "abandoned profligate." The latter thus vaguely indicated

individual is a middle-aged widower of perhaps not immaculate morals, but who, as lord of the manor and chief landed proprietor in these parts, is allowed to be charitable and kind enough,—which, however, will not, I am afraid, save him—at least, in the opinion of his clergyman. The country people are remarkably ignorant, unenlightened, *unpolitical*, unpoetical rustics, but remarkably well off, paying only three pounds a year for excellent four-roomed cottages, having abundance of cheap and good food, and various rights of common, and privileges which help to make them comfortable. It is an astonishing sleepy and quiet sort of community and neighbourhood, and this is a pretty place, on the edge of a wild common, with fine clumps of fir wood about it, and a picturesquely *coloured* district of heath, gorse, broom, and pine growth, extending just far enough round the grounds to make one believe one was in a pretty country.

As I hear no more of the present French Revolution down here, I am reading Lamartine's ("Les Girondins") account of their first one. It's just like reading to-day's Paris newspaper.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

You will be glad to hear that, after encountering every possible let and hindrance from their amiable manager, and being made by him to pay *ten pounds* for the use of the theatre, company, gas, etc., my poor young fellow-actors, for whose sake I came down here, will have cleared a sum that will be an immense help to poor folk living upon £2 a week. I was

delighted with having been able to serve them much better than I had feared I might. People's comparative earnings make me reflect. I have been grumbling not a little at my weekly earnings. Thackeray, for that wonderful book, "Vanity Fair," gets £60 a month; the curate who preached to us on Sunday and does duty in two parishes, has £60 a year. Perpend! Good-bye, my dear.

Believe me ever yours,
FANNY.

Portsmouth, Wednesday.

DEAR T——,

What a marvellous era in the world's history is this we are living in! Kings, princes, and potentates flying dismayed to the right and left, and nation after nation rising up, demanding a freedom which God knows how few of them seem capable of using.

The last month in Europe has been like the breathless reading of the most exciting novel, and every day and hour almost teems with events that surpass in suddenness and importance all that has gone before.

The Austrians will not give up Italy without a struggle, and I suppose through that channel the floodgates will be thrown open that will deluge all Europe with blood.

Is not the position of the Emperor of Russia awful in its singularity—the solitary despot of the civilized world?

The great body of the Austrian empire is falling asunder, and all its limbs standing up, separate national bodies. Hungary, Bohemia, Poland will again have

individual existence, and the King of Prussia will be undoubtedly hereafter the head of a huge German Confederacy.

In the mean time, I am sure you will rejoice that Metternich was mistaken, and that "it," as he was pleased to designate the existing state of Europe, did not even, as he said it would, "last his time."

Our country is wonderful ; I mean this, my blessed England receiving into her bosom the exiled minister and dethroned King of France, and the detested Crown Prince of Prussia, with the dispassionate hospitality of a general house of refuge for ruined royalties.

The spirit and temper of this English people is noble in its steadfastness : with much of national grievance to redress and burdens to throw off, the long habit of comparative freedom, and the innately loyal and conservative character of the nation, have produced a popular feeling that at this time of universal disturbance is most striking in its deliberate adherence to established right and good order. Alone of all the thrones in Europe, that of our excellent queen and her admirable consort stands unshaken ; alone of all the political constitutions, that of the country they govern is threatened with no fatal convulsion : in the midst of the failing credit and disturbed financial interests of the Continent, our funds have been gradually advancing in value, and our public credit rises as the aspect of affairs becomes more and more involved and threatening abroad.

Ireland is our weak point, and, as we have to *atone* there for cruelty, and injustice, and neglect, too long persisted in, that will be the quarter from which we

shall receive our share of the national judgments which are being executed all over the world.

A short time ago I saw an admirable letter of Lord Clarendon's, who is now Lord Lieutenant; but though he has hitherto conducted his most difficult government with great ability, there is so much real evil in the condition of the Irish, that, combined with their folly, their ignorance, and the wickedness of their instigators, I do not think it possible that the summer will pass over without that wretched country again becoming the theatre of anarchy and turbulent resistance to authority.

My brother-in-law has returned from Rome, and my sister will follow him as soon as the weather will admit of her crossing the Alps with her babies. All his property is in the French funds, that seems an insecure security nowadays. . . .

In England we shall have an extended right of suffrage, a smaller army, a cheaper government, reduced taxation, and some modification of the land tenure,—change, but no revolution, and no fits, I think. This people deserve freedom, for they alone, and you, descended from them, have shown that they know what it means. Considerable changes we shall have, but the wisdom and wealth of our middle classes is a feature in our social existence without European parallel; it is the salvation of the country. I know you hate crossed writing, so good-bye. I am afraid these fantastic French fools will bring Republicanism into contempt. France seems to be threatened with national bankruptcy, *et puis—alors—vous verrez.*

Always affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

Colchester.

I came from Yarmouth to-day, having lodged there in a strange old inn that belonged, in our Republican days, to Judge Bradshaw; in one room of which, they say, Cromwell signed Charles I.'s death warrant; but this, I think, is a mistake. He is said, however, to have lived much in the house, which, at that time, belonged to the Bradshaw family. The house is of a much earlier date, though, than that, and was once, undoubtedly, a royal residence; for in a fine old oak room, the carved panelling of which was as black as ebony, the ceiling was all wrought with the roses and the *fleur-de-lys*. The kitchen and bar-room were both made out of an old banqueting-hall, immensely lofty, and with a very fine carved ceiling, and stone-mullioned windows, of capital style and preservation. The staircase was one of those precious, broad, easy-graded ascents, up which you could almost take a carriage, with a fine heavy oak baluster; and on the upper floor, three good-sized rooms made out of one, with another elaborately carved ceiling. It was really a most curious and picturesque place, and is now the "Star Inn" at Yarmouth, and will doubtless become gradually changed and modernized and pulled to pieces, till both its remaining fine old characteristics and its traditions are lost—as, in good measure, they already are, for, as I said before, the house bears traces of having been a royal residence long before Cromwell's time. . . .

The older English country houses are full of quaint and picturesque relics of former times; but I think there is a cruel indifference sometimes to their

preservation ; e.g. think of the Norwich people allowing the house of Sir Thomas Browne to be dismantled of all its wood-carving, which was sent up to London and sold in morsels, I suppose, to the Jews in Wardour Street.

Yours affectionately,
FANNY.

Portsmouth, Friday, March 31st, 1848.

I did not walk on my arrival in Portsmouth, dear Hal, but dined. The day was very beautiful all along, and I enjoyed as much of it as my assiduous study of the *Times* newspaper would allow.

I am glad you saw Mitchell, because now you can conceive what a funny colloquy that was of mine with him, about the price of the seats at my readings. [Mr. Mitchell, court bookseller, queen's publisher, box-letter to the nobility, general undertaker of pleasures and amusements for the fashionable great world of London, was my manager and paymaster throughout all my public reading career in England.] In making the preliminary arrangements for them he had, in my opinion, put the prices too high, demanding ten shillings for them. When I said they were not worth two, and certainly ought not to be charged more than five, he replied, with much feeling, for the British aristocracy, whom he idolized, and whom he thought fit on this occasion to designate, collectively, under the title of my friend, Lord Lansdowne, that he couldn't think of insulting him by making him pay only five shillings to hear me read. I wonder why poor dear Lord Lansdowne can't be asked five shillings? I would have charged him, and all the smaller and greater nobility of the realm, half a crown, and been rather

ashamed of the pennyworth they got for it. But a thing is worth what it will fetch, and no one knows that better than Mr. Mitchell. I should think any sensible being would prefer paying half a crown to the honour and glory of disbursing twice that sum for a two-hours' reading—even by me, even of Shakespeare. I wish, while you were in personal connection with my manager Mitchell, you had remonstrated with him about those ridiculous dandified advertizements. You might have expressed my dislike of such fopperies, and perhaps saved me a few shillings in pink and blue and yellow note-paper; though it really almost seems a pity to interfere with the elegancies of poor Mitchell, who is nothing if not elegant. However, I wish he would not be so at my expense who have no particle of that exquisite quality in my whole composition, and find the grovelling one of avarice growing daily upon me.

I have already had a letter from Henry Greville this morning, telling me the result of *two* interviews *he* has had with Mitchell about the readings; also—which interests me far more than my own interests—of the utter routing of the Austrians in the Milanese—hurrah!—also of his determination to buy the house in Eaton Place. . . . Adelaide must come home by sea, for it is impossible that she should travel either through France or Germany without incurring the risk of much annoyance, if nothing worse. The S—— in the dragoon regiment in Dublin is E——'s younger brother. . . .

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Bannisters, Tuesday, 14th, 1848.

Liston's [the eminent surgeon] death shocked me very much, and I felt very certain that he was himself aware of his own condition. I observed, during my intercourse with him latterly, a listless melancholy in his manner, a circumstance that puzzled me a good deal in contrast with his powerful frame, and vigorous appearance, and blunt, offhand manner. I think I understand now, and can compassionate certain expressions in his last note to me, which, when I received it, made a painful and unfavourable impression upon me. I suppose he did not believe in a future state of existence, and have no doubt that, latterly, he had a distinct anticipation of his own impending annihilation. His great strength and magnificent physical structure, of course, suggested no such apprehension to persons who knew nothing of his malady [Liston died of aneurism in the throat], but when I saw him last he told me he was much more ill than I was; that he had been spitting up a quantity of blood, and was "all wrong." . . .

I cannot take your thanks, my dear Hal, about "Wilhelm Meister." . . . I never offer anything to any one; neither would I willingly, when asked for it, withhold anything from any one. I believe the only difference that I really make between my "*friends*" and my "*fellow creatures*" is one of pure sentiment: I love the former, and am completely indifferent to the latter, but I would *do* as much for the latter as for the former.

My marks in "Wilhelm Meister" will not, as you expect, "explain themselves," for the passages that

I admire for their artistic literary beauty, their keen worldly wisdom, their profound insight, and noble truth, as well as those which charm me only by their brilliant execution, and those which command my whole, my entire feeling of sympathy, are all alike indicated by the one straight line down the side of the text. I think, however, you will distinguish what I agree with from what I only admire. It is a wonderful book, and its most striking characteristic to me is its absolute moral, dispassionate impartiality. Outward loveliness of the material universe, inward ugliness of human nature in its various distortions; the wisdom and the foolishness of man's aims, and the modes of pursuing them; the passions of the senses, the affections of the heart, the aspirations of the soul; the fine metaphysical experiences of the transcendental religionists; the semi-sensual, outward piety of the half-idolatrous Roman Catholic; the great and the little, the shallow and the deep of humanity in this its stage of action and development,—are delineated with the most perfect apparent indifference of sentiment, combined with the most perfect accuracy of observation. He pleads no cause of man or thing, and the absence of all indication of human sympathy is very painful to me in his book. It is only because God is represented as a Being of perfect love, that we can endure the idea of Him as also a Being of perfect knowledge. Goethe, as I believe I have told you, always reminds me of Ariel, a creature whose nature—*superhuman* through power and knowledge of various kinds—is *under-human* in other respects (love and the capacity of sympathy), and was therefore

subject to the nobler moral nature of Prospero. Activity seems to be the only principle which Goethe advocates, activity and earnestness—especially in self-culture,—and in this last quality, which he sublimely advocates, I find the only *comfortable* element in his wonderful writings. *He* is *inhuman*, not superhuman.

God bless you. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

King Street, St. James, Friday, 17th.

MY DEAREST HAL,

I cannot be making arrangements for going over to Dublin so far ahead as the 22nd of May, for by that time Dublin may have been swallowed up by Young Ireland.

Your theory of my reading elegant extracts from Shakespeare is very pretty, but absolutely nothing to the purpose for my purpose. . . . All that is *merely* especially beautiful is sedulously cut out in my reading version, in order to preserve the skeleton of the story; because the audiences that I shall address are not familiar with the plays, and what they want is as much as possible of the excitement of a dramatic entertainment to be obtained without entering the doors of a theatre. . . .

You forget to what a number of people Lambs and Bullocks give their names; Hog, which, by the bye, is spelt Hogge, has by no means the pre-eminence in that honour.

I saw Lady Lansdowne the other day, who said the ministers were extremely anxious about Ireland,

and that the demonstrations with regard to St. Patrick's day kept them in a state of great alarm. Lord Lansdowne is tolerably well just now, but has been quite ill; and Lord John Russell is so ill and worn out, that they say he will be obliged to resign: in which case I suppose Lord Lansdowne would be premier. The position of people at the head of governments in this year of grace is certainly not enviable. D'Israeli said, last night, he couldn't see why Dublin should not be burnt to the ground; that he could understand the use of London, or even of Paris, but that the *use* of Dublin was a mystery. I suggested its being the spring and source and fountain-head of Guinness's stout, but I don't think he considered even that a sufficient *raison d'être* for your troublesome capital, or porter an equivalent for the ten righteous men who might save a city.

Thackeray tells a comical story of having received a letter from his father-in-law in Paris, urging him by all means to send over his daughter there, and, indeed, go over himself, for that the frightful riots in England, especially those in London, Trafalgar Square, Kennington, etc., must of course make it a most undesirable residence; and that they would find Paris a much safer and quieter one: which reminds me of the equally earnest entreaties of my dear American friends that I should hasten to remove my poor pennies from the perilous guardianship of the Bank of England, and convert them with all despatch to the safe keeping of American securities!

I have been going out a good deal during the last three weeks, and mean to continue to do so while I am

in London, partly because, as I am about to go away, I wish to see as much as I can of its pleasant and remarkable society, and partly, too, from a motive of *policy*, though I hate it almost as much as Sir Andrew Ague-cheek did. I mean to read in London before I leave it, and a great many of my fine lady and gentlemen acquaintances will come and hear me, provided I don't give them time to forget my existence, but keep them well in mind of it by duly presenting myself amongst them. "Out of sight, out of mind," is necessarily the motto of all societies, and considerations of interest more than pleasure often induce our artists and literary men to produce themselves in the world lest they should be forgotten by it. Nor, indeed, is this merely the calculation of those who expect any profit from society; the very pleasure-hunters themselves, find that they must not get thrown out, or withdraw for a moment, or disappear below the surface for an instant, for if they do, the mad tide goes over them, and they are neither asked for, nor looked for, called for, nor thought of, "Qui quitte sa place la perd," and there is nothing so easy as to be forgotten. . . .

Besides all this, now that my departure from England approaches, I feel as if I had enjoyed and profited too little by the intercourse of all the clever people I live among, and whose conversation you know I take considerable pleasure in. I begin now, in listening, as I did last night to D'Israeli and Milnes and Carlyle, and E——'s artist friend, Mr. Swinton, to remember that these are bright lights in one of the brightest intellectual centres in Europe, and that I am within their sphere but for a time. . . .

I called at the Milmans' yesterday, and found Mrs. Austin there, whom I listened to, almost without drawing breath, for an hour. She has just returned from Paris, where she lived with all the leading political people of day, and she says she feels as if she had been looking at a battle-field strewn with her acquaintances. Her account of all that is going on, is most interesting, knowing, as she does, all the principal actors and sufferers in these events, personally and intimately.

To-day the report is, that the Bank of France has suspended payment. The ruin of the Rothschilds is not true, though they are great losers by these catastrophes. The Provisional Government has very wisely and wittily devised, as a means of raising money, to lay a tax of six hundred francs a year upon everybody who *keeps more than one servant*! Can folly go beyond that?

Henry Greville showed me yesterday a letter he had received from Paris, from Count Pahlen, saying that, though the guillotine was not yet erected, the reign of terror had virtually commenced; for that the pusillanimous dread that kept the whole nation in awe of a handful of pickpockets, could be described as nothing else.

I am much concerned about E——'s fortune, the whole of which is, I believe, lodged in French funds. All property there must be in terrible jeopardy, I fear.

Lady G—— F—— went to Claremont two days ago, and says that Louis Philippe's deportment is that of a servant out of place. She did not add, "*Pas de bonne maison.*" . . .

Ever yours,
FANNY.

[On the famous 10th of April, the day of the great Chartist meeting, I drove from King Street to Westminster Bridge in the morning, before the monster demonstration took place; and though the shops were shut, and the streets deserted, everything was perfectly quiet and orderly, and nothing that *appeared* indicated the political disturbance with which the city was threatened—the dread of which induced people, as far as the Regent's Park from the Houses of Parliament, to pack up their valuables and plate, etc., and prepare for instant flight from London. In the evening, my friends would hardly believe my peaceful progress down Whitehall, and I heard two striking incidents, among the day's smaller occurrences: that Prince Louis Napoleon had enrolled himself among the special constables for the preservation of peace and order; and that M. Guizot, standing where men of every grade, from dandies to draymen, were flocking to accept the same service of public preservation, kept exclaiming, with tears in his eyes, "Oh, le brave peuple! le brave peuple!"—a contrast certainly to his Parisian barricaders.

In the summer of 1848, I returned to America, where my great good fortune in the success of my public readings soon enabled me to realize my long cherished hope of purchasing a small cottage and a few acres of land in the beautiful and beloved neighbourhood of Lenox.]

THE END.

